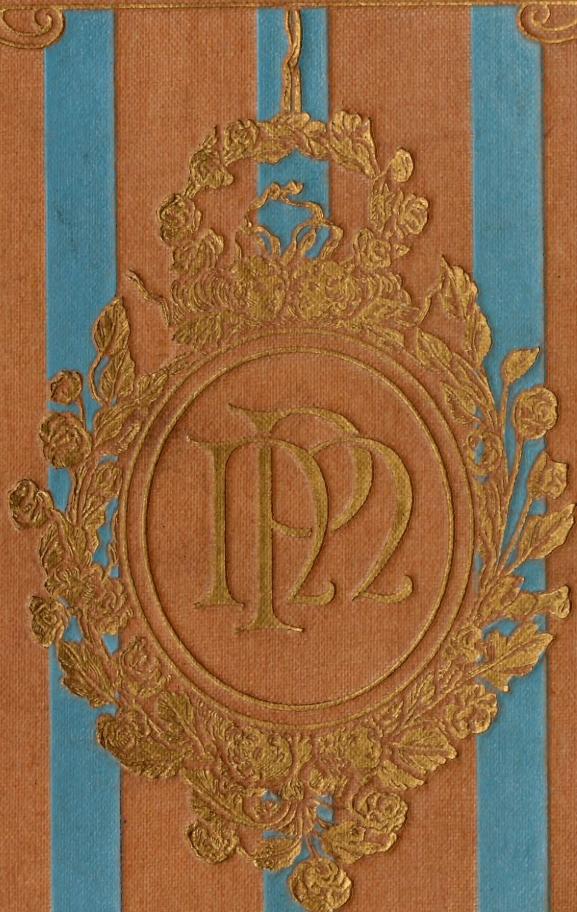


THE DAYS THAT
ARE NO MORE



PRINCESS PAULINE METTERNICH



Agnes H. Burtell Cott.



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THE DAYS THAT
ARE NO MORE



PRINCESS PAULINE METTERNICH

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THE DAYS THAT ARE NO MORE

SOME REMINISCENCES

BY

PRINCESS PAULINE METTERNICH

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PRINCESS PAULINE METTERNICH AND THE SECOND EMPIRE

SOME NOTES

BY EDWARD LEGGE

SOME time in June 1920, I read the following paragraph in *Le Temps*:

“Now and then the Empress Eugénie comes to see us, passing like a shadow. To-day we learn from Vienna that Princess Metternich is going to publish her recollections. Like two old fairies of a time almost fabulous the Empress Eugénie and Princess Pauline de Metternich look silently at each other across a Europe turned upside down. What would they say? Nothing would be more expressive than total silence. But the Empress might tell the Princess that one day a few years ago, when she had picked a flower in what was once the garden of the Tuileries, the custodian remonstrated with her, contenting himself, however, with saying, ‘I won’t complain of you this time, my good woman, but

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don't do it again !' The Empress, continuing her walk, thanked the representative of Authority with a smile not without a suggestion of melancholy, but she did not explain why she had picked that flower, nor tell the custodian who she was. Perhaps she thought that since the time of which the flower had reminded her there had been two deluges, and that her name would doubtless mean nothing to the guardian of the Rue des Tuilleries."

Princess Metternich had this in common with the Empress Eugénie—that she found as many enthusiastic defenders as scornful enemies. She owed their existence entirely to herself, to her peculiar idiosyncrasies. A devoted friend of the persons who frequented her *salons*, she lashed with contemptuous words those whom, often for no serious reason, she wished to get rid of. She loved and she detested with passionate sincerity. People soon came to treat her similarly. She was "Notre Dame de Vienne" and also "la Reine Peste." Daughter of a wealthy Hungarian, Count Sandor, celebrated for his equestrian feats and regarded as the victim of mental derangement, she boasted of her father's peculiarities and found in them an excuse for her own oddities. Shortly after her marriage to Prince Richard Metternich, son of the

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eminent diplomatist, she made her first appearance in Paris in 1859, at the moment of the outbreak of war between France and Italy, and when her husband was hoping to restore peace.

The newcomers, who were cordially received at the Tuileries, began their entertaining with some "Thursdays," at which everybody smoked. These parties were presided over by the Princess, who was found to be an inveterate smoker. The ditties sung by the hostess were not all in the purest taste. She had not been among the Parisians many months ere the more prudish discovered that they had among the reputed *grandes dames* an Ambassadress who did not scruple to behave, and not infrequently, like a *grisette*. She kissed Count Beust (who is still remembered in London by a select few) at an official reception at the Tuileries, to wheedle him into giving a fancy-dress ball, and said impertinent things of the Empress who had impulsively taken the eccentric Hungarian to her heart, but it was conceded that she had caste, which in a measure atoned for her follies, in some of which the consort of Napoleon III. participated, as the Comtesse de Pourtalès and the Princesse de Sagan knew better than most people. I can give only an inkling of her eccentricities, which were passed over by the Empress with a smile. But in those days the Imperial lady

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was not the Empress some of us knew at Chislehurst and Farnborough Hill until the end of 1919, when she left England for Cap Martin before starting on her last journey—to Spain.

Princess Metternich found at Paris the aristocratic world that she had left at Vienna. She had passed from one cosmopolitan atmosphere only to enter into a similar one, the Empress Eugénie's Court being largely composed of foreigners from all quarters of the globe. Russians, English, and Americans mingled with Spaniards and Italians, a few Germans, and some Mexicans, of whom Mme. Erazzua was the most prominent. Hence the celebrated "Five Quarters of the World" ball was given. I had the advantage of hearing much about that entertainment from a lady who (with her sister, Miss Carter) was present at it—Mrs. Ronalds, who died only a few years ago. Her sister represented "America" in the tableaux, and Mrs. Ronalds had preserved illustrations of the scene published by the Paris papers of the period.

The formalism of the late Emperor Francis Joseph's Court troubled Mme. de Metternich. She was always being besought to remember that she was Pauline Sandor, the wife of an eminent diplomatist's son. At the Tuileries neither Morny the illegitimate, nor Persigny the equivocal, nor ladies with the reputation

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of a Lehon or a Castiglione could pretend to be shocked at any slang word or audacious gesture of Princess Metternich. It would not have surprised anyone in the *monde*, *demi-monde*, or *quart de monde* to have seen the Austrian Ambassadress jump on the table and dance the “can-can!” She was quite equal to it.

Three ladies only were endowed with the hall-mark *gracieuse*—Mesdames de Metternich, de Galliffet, and de Pourtales—and they were so described from 1860 until 1870. Winterhalter, who painted most of the *élégances* of the Second Empire, was unable to beautify the first-named lady to a point which would make one forget her plainness. But what fire and life he put into her eyes! In his portrait the artist accentuated her nationality by the contrast of her features with the gauzes and light veils which enveloped the undulating and *bouffante* hair surmounting her high forehead. The Princess, however, anticipated the observations which she felt would be made by the critical concerning her lack of beauty: she had the wit to describe herself as “*le singe à la mode*” (the “fashionable monkey”), the appellation by which she was ever after known. Her lack of loveliness did not lessen her fame, and she had the proud satisfaction of being recognised as the foremost of the crowd of women who amused the

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frequenter of the Tuileries, Fontainebleau, and Compiègne.

Princess Metternich's charm was, and is, her intelligence; that of the Marquise de Galliffet was the beauty which, as the French readily admitted, characterises the daughters of Albion. The Marquise's chin revealed the woman who means to make all-comers bow to her caprices. Of Scottish descent, she was recognised as the queen of fashion, the ruler of a great *couturière*, the woman who inaugurated a sober style of dress, especially that worn on the racecourses frequented by "sports-women," a word coined in the first years of the Imperial *régime*. Her taste and her *toilettes* made her an authority in a large section of that Paris Society which she dominated, while her apparent coldness, which alienated many from her, concealed a heart of gold and an ever-pitying soul. Such was the adorable Mme. de Galliffet, one of King Edward's favourites.

Mme. de Pourtales (Princess Metternich's best friend) was, on the contrary, sufficiently *mignonne* to tempt the brush of a Latour—gracious as one of Lancret's personages. She made people dream of those Marquises of the eighteenth century that were, and still are, to be seen in "L'Accord Parfait" or the "Lecture." She was "the beautiful Mme. de Pourtales," and recalled the Pompadour in a Court which

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dreamt of resuscitating the epoch of the Regency. This beautiful woman, who died only some half-dozen years ago, had not that *frivolité outrée* which characterised so many of her contemporaries. She divined Bismarck's intentions more clearly than all the diplomatists who buzzed around Napoleon III. and his ambitious consort. Why was she, who knew so much, not listened to? She had a *grâce ancienne* which made her contemporaries regard her as a late arrival from the preceding century. Her husband was an Alsatian, and in 1871 her portrait, showing her in the picturesque dress of the women of that conquered province, was circulated all over the world.

The Comtesse de Castiglione prided herself upon being the woman who had Napoleon III. more in hand than any other. The Empress resented this weakness of her consort, but said nothing, and continued to invite the objectionable Italian to her "Mondays." (There is still at least one person in London in 1921 who claims to have been a frequent attendant at the Imperial lady's "Lundis.") But it was Princess Metternich who exercised over Eugénie the most powerful influence. This intensely amusing blonde assumed a freedom at the French Court which she would not have displayed at the Hofburg. She introduced dancing in gardens converted into ball-

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rooms, illumined by thousands of coloured lights, thus producing the aspect now of a veritable Eden, anon of the infernal regions. Those who felt themselves impelled to do likewise at a ruinous expenditure complained that Paris had become a modern Babylon, with the Austrian lady as Semiramis.

During the eighteen years of the Second Empire no one was more discussed than the wife of the Austrian Ambassador. The Princess took singers at the “halls” into her favour, and imitated them to the life in her *salons* in the presence of the leaders of Paris Society. The Emperor would say to his English, as well as to his French, friends, “There are to be private theatricals at Compiègne, a revue or something of the kind. The Empress has asked Mme. de Metternich to appear;” and he would add smilingly, “*C'est tout dire, n'est ce pas?* You'd better come.” And our Englishman did not fail to put in an appearance at Compiègne on “the night.” The programme was certain to amuse our favoured countryfolk when the Compiègne “bill” contained *Les Commentaires de César*, with the boy-Prince Imperial as a grenadier in full uniform and Princess Pauline as a *vivandière* of the Turcos, in which character she sang a song which was very popular at the time; its refrain was :

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Je suis une guerrière,
Au cœur, au cœur joyeux ;
La vi, la vivandière
Des Turcos bleus.

Round about the country homes of the Imperial couple—Compiègne and Fontainebleau—there were paper chases, in which the Empress took part. All the ladies who joined in these “high jinks” wore unusually short skirts by “order” of the Princess Pauline. The more sedate members of the Court denounced this garb, but the Austrian Ambassador laughed at their prudery, and the Empress was as wax in her hands. Needless to say that the caricaturists revelled in these pranks of Parisian “high society.”

But there are matters of infinitely greater importance calling for explanation. In December 1872, Prince Jérôme Napoleon (father of that Prince Victor to whom the late Empress bequeathed Farnborough Hill) visited Napoleon III. at Chislehurst less than a month before his unexpected and tragic death. Some months previously Princess Metternich was also a visitor at Chislehurst. In the Emperor’s desk, according to Prince Jérôme (better known as “Plon-Plon,” a sobriquet given him in Crimean War days), were drafts of two Treaties which had been negotiated by France with Italy and Austria, under the terms of which those Powers conditionally agreed to

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support France should she be attacked (as in 1870 she was) by Germany. Later, after Princess Pauline's visit, the draft Treaty with Austria could not be found ! This led to the Empress saying to Prince Jérôme, "*Mon Dieu !* You have opened my eyes. Now I understand the object of a visit which I received from Princess Metternich some months ago." All this, and much more, was told to Alfred Darimon by Prince Jérôme himself. Thiers, who was President from March 1871 until the 24th of May, 1873 (four months after the death of Napoleon III.), was said to have had his spies at Camden Place, the Imperial residence, whose duties were (1) to see that no documents or "papers" of any kind were secretly taken out of "Camden," and (2) to report to the Paris authorities the names of all visitors received by the Emperor, the Empress, the Prince Imperial (!), and M. Franceschini Pietri, the deposed Sovereign's secretary. The French Government knew, or suspected, that copies of the draft Treaties between Austria, Italy, and France were among the Emperor Napoleon's "papers" at Chislehurst ; and possibly the Vienna Foreign Office would not have asked troublesome questions had some enterprising visitor to Chislehurst "annexed" the draft Treaty to which Austria was a party, and presented it to the Government of Francis Joseph.

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“The women of the Second Empire,” said General de Galliffet, “can be characterised in two words: they were more frank and *much cheaper*.” The heroic General enjoyed the friendship of the Prince of Wales who became King Edward VII., and was entertained by H.R.H. whenever he came to England, which was not often. But they frequently met in Paris before and after the fall of the Second Empire. De Galliffet had a warm friend in Napoleon III., and was in Princess Pauline’s good books. He was too independent and outspoken for the Empress, and never hesitated to correct her when she was inaccurate on military subjects—which was not seldom.

Lord Malmesbury was candid enough to write (October 1, 1862): “All the women surrounding the Empress Eugénie are a bad lot (*mauvais ton*), with the exception of Mme. Walewska. Their hair is dressed in Chinese style, and so tightly arranged that they can hardly close their eyes, and they wear scarlet jackets and mantles, which go very badly with their complexions, which are all very blond. I returned to Paris from Fontainebleau in one of the Imperial carriages with M. and Mme. de Morny, M. Walewski and his wife, and the two *dames d’honneur* then on duty. Two of the ladies (one of whom was Mme. de Pierre, *née* Thorne, an American, and the other Mme. de Morny, a Russian)

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smoked all the way under the Empress's nose. The Empress was too indulgent to her entourage."

"Walewska" (note the "a") is a name known to all students of Napoleonic history, and it came again into prominence in the first week of May 1921, when the hundredth anniversary of the great captain's death was celebrated in France. The bearer of the name "Walewska" was that beautiful Polish girl who had gained the love of Napoleon and who bore him a son, who ultimately became the Ambassador of France to the Court of St. James. She fully reciprocated the Emperor's passion, and had the truly feminine courage to visit secretly her exiled lover at Elba. The Ambassador Walewski (note the "i," his own way of spelling it) married a lady with Italian blood in her veins. In the fullest sense of the word, this Mme. Walewska was a remarkable woman, and developed into one of the three ladies who were the "stars" of the ill-fated Second Empire, the two others being the Empress Eugénie and Princess Pauline Metternich. Mme. Walewska had gained (and I state it as a fact personally given to me for use in this Preface as recently as May 1921) the affection as well as the friendship of Bismarck when he was Prussian Minister in Paris, and a constant visitor and admirer of the lady in question.

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This Mme. Walewska had a grandson, Count Louis Mathéus Walewski, who, at the outbreak of the world-war in 1914, was a captain in the 29th Dragoons, stationed at Rheims. By September 1915 he had become a major, and took part in the attack on the German front. After that great battle he was reported as missing, and was vainly searched for in all the prisoners' camps in Germany. Less than a year ago his body was found in a shell-hole among a number of his men. The heroic major's widow, the present Countess Marguérite Mathéus Walewska (so she writes it), was upon her marriage received with open arms by her late husband's grandmother. That shrewd and gifted old lady had immediately recognised that a very remarkable new member had been added to her family, and until her death appreciated at its full value the rare beauty and intelligence of her grandson's wife. Often she declared that the only Walewskas worthy of the name were those who, like herself and the Countess Marguérite, had married into the Napoleonic family, and she attributed their superiority to her Italian, and to Marguérite's Corsican, ancestry.

“*La grand'mère Walewska*,” as she was called in the family, was so enamoured of her youthful grandchild, Countess Marguérite, that she made the young lady stay with her

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on all possible occasions. The veteran *grande dame* would tell Marguérite all manner of stories and events of that historical past in which she had so prominently figured, especially those extraordinary episodes of which Princess Metternich was the central figure. Thus the grandmother's young friend came to have a full acquaintance with all that had happened behind the scenes during the lifetime of Napoleon III. and afterwards under the Republic. Thus much that is of historical interest and value is still preserved for posterity, thanks to this gifted and receptive witness, the Countess Walewska of the present day. Grandmother Walewska, who attained great age, although less than that of Eugénie, died only a few years ago in her sleep. Need I say that her memory is piously preserved by her family, as is that of the Great Emperor and military genius, who was also the most romantic of lovers?

At the Tuileries in the eighteen-sixties Princess Metternich saw Winterhalter's great picture of the Empress, "*Le Watteau maigre*," the original of which I got a glimpse of at Farnborough Hill one memorable day when the late M. Franceschini Pietri was very good-naturedly "coaching" me on many matters concerning the great lady whom he served so well until a few weeks before his death. Princess Pauline will agree that he could be

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very “snubby” on occasion, even to his Imperial mistress, who always “gave it him back” with interest. The lady from Vienna had met Pietri at Chislehurst.

The Empress felt more at home at St. Cloud than anywhere else. There was less formality at that palace, as Princess Metternich discovered when she was there. People who had merely called there were kept to dinner, and casual visitors were taken for drives in ordinary, not state, carriages. At St. Cloud our Austrian Princess met the Princesses of the (Imperial) “blood”—the delightful Mathilde, for example, whom many had supposed the Emperor would have married. And there were Princess Clotilde of Sardinia, mother of that Prince Victor to whom the Empress bequeathed Farnborough Hill; and that *altesse impériale*, Mme. Lucien Murat, mother of the now venerable Anna, the widowed Duchesse de Mouchy, the marriage being insisted upon by the Emperor for reasons best known to himself; Princess Gabrielli, also a Murat, whom I remember when she resided in London; and the enigmatic Mme. de Castiglione; and any number of French beauties not of the Imperial family—the Comtesse Fleury (a Russian), the Duchesse d’Isly, the Maréchale Canrobert, the Baronne de Bourgoing (little known in England), and Mesdames de Galliffet and de Pourtalès. Of the

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latter I have a portrait given to me by her shortly before her death a few years ago. All these fair dames had to be amused, and ordinarily it was Princess Pauline who provided them with the requisite fun—“*des riens, beaucoup de riens*”; for the reign of futilities had begun.

Very popular at St. Cloud was the *fête champêtre* of the Watteau pattern, and it was “the Metternich” who made the ladies dress in the style she desired. They had all to be powdered, even when engaged in these outdoor festivities. Imagine the incongruity—powdered faces in a Watteau scene! What would Ruskin have said? And “Jimmy” Whistler, who knew his Paris to its often wholly inartistic and indescribable depths? And Leighton the art-incorruptible? Well, despite all the fair and thoroughgoing Pauline’s blandishments and polite bullying, one lovely creature, Mme. de Persigny, flatly refused to powder herself for this comical Watteau revival. Worse than this—she persisted in appearing *en scène* with her beautiful chestnut hair falling over her plump shoulders! Princess Metternich flew into a rage, and, almost tearfully, craved the interposition of the Empress, who unkindly screamed with laughter, saying soothingly: “Don’t distress yourself, my dear Pauline—you know Mme. de Persigny’s mother is *mad!*” “Well,

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madame," exclaimed Princess Metternich, at the top of her voice, "what of that? *My father* is also mad, yet *I* am well powdered!" Before every performance of a charade, or what not, there was a "scene," making the courtiers of the eighteen-sixties laugh as, in the great days of Troyes, the Presidents of the Parliament had laughed at the antics of a flea—Mme. Desroches' flea.

The Empress's "Mondays," held in the winter only, were essentially private gatherings. These were given in the White Salon of the Tuileries—so called after the First Consul who became Napoleon I. The guests danced until supper-time. Princess Metternich and the Comtesse de Castiglione were, in turn, the principal figures at these comparatively cosy parties; the former was noted for her wit, the latter for her beauty. The *cotillon* was invariably led by the Marquis de Caux, whose marriage to Adelina Patti was brought about by the Empress, with whom the volatile arranger of dances was a great favourite.

It was gratifying to Princess Metternich, and doubtless to some of the other guests at Fontainebleau, to find etiquette less stringent there than at the other Imperial homes. The Princess will remember her stay at Fontainebleau if only because of the devotion of the Chevalier Nigra, the Italian Ambassador, to the Empress, who seemed particularly happy

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when boating on the great lake, while the diplomatist warbled “songs of Arcady” to the infatuated lady. Her unconcealed partiality—it might be said affection—for Nigra provoked scandal and not a little sarcastic merriment.

Among Princess Metternich’s many gifts is that of an exceptionally good memory, as shown by nearly every page of her volume, which will serve to keep her always in remembrance. One of her great friends in Paris in the old days was, and I daresay is in 1921, Princess Anna Murat, the aged widow of the Duc de Mouchy. The news of their quite unexpected engagement is said by a reliable authority on Second Empire matters to have “scandalised the residents in the heraldic faubourg” (the Faubourg St. Germain, the home of the old Royalists, the bitter opponents of Eugénie and Napoleon III.). That devoted friend, from her infancy, of the Empress, Prosper Mérimée, in a letter written to Mr. Panizzi, of British Museum fame, on the 2nd of November, 1865, when Princess Metternich was the central figure in social and diplomatic Paris, a position which she never lost, said: “Your friend, Princess Anna Murat, is about to be married to the Duc de Mouchy, who is one of the best of the young men of to-day. He is a fortnight younger than the lady, has an income of 200,000 livres, and is sufficiently good-looking. He is also very polished, and more natural

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than the *cacodés* in general. The funny thing is that he is the ally and relative of all the wildest Legitimists in France. The Duc de Noailles is his uncle."

The Legitimists, it may be added for the benefit of the younger readers of Princess Pauline's volume, were the active opponents of Napoleon III. and his followers, many of whom were treated with the utmost liberality by the Emperor from the moment he was placed on the throne. Many of them detested the Empress: among these was the well-known General Fleury, one of whose sons recently issued a work, in English, which cannot be said to be devoid of flattery of Eugénie. General Fleury stoutly opposed the marriage of Napoleon III. and Mlle. de Montijo, whose mother so pestered her Imperial son-in-law for money that he ordered her to leave France.

October 1869 (the year before the war with Prussia) found the Empress at Constantinople, where she stayed for a few days as the Sultan's guest after witnessing the inauguration of the Suez Canal, the project of her relative, Ferdinand de Lesseps, who some years later came to irremediable pecuniary grief. During her stay in the capital of the Unspeakable Turk she learnt that all the talk in Paris was of the probability of a duel between Prince Metternich (Pauline's husband) and Comte de Beaumont, the latter of whom

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had already fought duels with two members of the Jockey Club to defend the reputation of his wife. Presumably Prince Metternich had been also “saying things” about Mme. de Beaumont, and had received, or was expecting to receive, a challenge from the infuriated husband. Writing to her husband from the Imperial Palace of Beyle-Bey, Constantinople, on the 7th of October, 1869, the Empress, referring to the much-discussed duel, said: “Poor Metternich! I believe he is quarrelling with a lunatic.” The Comtesse de Beaumont is remembered to-day by the few as one of the most beautiful and gifted women of the period, of irreproachable character, and a close friend of the Empress and Emperor. I do not suppose that all this malevolent gossip about the Austrian Ambassador and the Comtesse de Beaumont caused Princess Metternich a moment’s uneasiness. She doubtless thought, with the Empress, that De Beaumont had temporarily “lost his head.”

Princess Metternich has stored up in her memory, and I daresay in her diaries, the wherewithal to give the world a “surprise” history of the final ten years’ existence of the Second Empire, which fell with a crash on the 4th of September, 1870—that Sunday when the Emperor (then on his way to Wilhelmshöhe, there to remain until he was liberated in the third week of the following

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March) was handed a telegram reporting how Paris had received the news of the defeat at Sedan on the 1st of September. Whither his wife had gone no one could tell him—as a matter of fact, no one knew; no, not even Princess Pauline's husband, who, with the Chevalier Nigra, the Italian Ambassador, had, to their great credit as men, succeeded in hustling her out of the Tuileries. Princess Pauline had also witnessed the flight. That 4th of September remains as fixed in my memory as ever, for on the previous day I had been granted formal permission to accompany the Saxon troops to Paris—a fortnight's march from the battlefield of Sedan. What happened in 1872, when the Princess, for the first time since the escape from the Tuileries, saw the Empress at Camden Place, Chislehurst, I have noted on another page. There is no evidence that the two ladies ever met again. When the Empress went to Ischl, some thirteen years ago, as the guest, for a couple of days, of the late Emperor Francis Joseph, Princess Pauline, who was then in Austria, telegraphed (so the papers said) that she was unable to visit Eugénie (who may not have been greatly surprised, or distressed, at the message).

How the Princess received the news of the Empress's sudden death at Madrid in July 1920, I have never heard. The event could scarcely have surprised her—certainly could

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not have saddened her after reading the explicit statement about the lost Treaty which Prince Jérôme Napoleon had allowed to be published, to which I have already referred.

In 1858, two years before Princess Metternich's descent upon Paris, the renowned Italian politician, Cavour, wrote to Chevalier Cibario: "I have enrolled in our diplomatic ranks the beautiful Comtesse de Castiglione, begging her to make love to, and, if necessary, to get under her thumb, the Emperor Napoleon." She had separated from her husband, whom she had married against her inclination, and, although very young, had become the lady-love of King Victor Emmanuel, who was not remarkable for virtue. This lady was the guest for a time of that other celebrity, Countess Walewska, who, like herself, was from Florence. Through the influence of Count Walewski, she was invited to a ball at the Tuileries, and made an immediate success, even rivalling the Empress and serving Cavour politically beyond his most sanguine expectations. She was utterly devoid of *esprit*, but possessed an instinctive cleverness. Precisely what she thought of herself was amusingly illustrated by her own words, written on the photographs which she gave to her friends: "I am equal to them by my birth, I surpass

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them by my beauty, I judge them by my *esprit*." At a later, but not the final, stage of her career, she proudly said: "My mother stupidly tied me to Castiglione. Had she taken me to France, *a Spanish woman would never have reigned!* I should not have brought about the Mexican war, nor have been the cause of the disaster at Sedan." What Talleyrand sarcastically said, when speaking of his wife, "Her *esprit* is like that of a rose," seems to have been applicable to Mme. de Castiglione, whose end was miserable.

While "the Castiglione" admittedly had greater influence over Napoleon III. than anyone else, Princess Metternich was admittedly supreme over the Empress. Those (and they were numerous) who were jealous of the power of the lady whom they called the "turbulent blond" asserted that she would not have acted at the Austrian Court as she acted at the French Court, and vehemently declared that she contributed more than anyone else to blow over the Tuileries that wind of fêtes, eccentricities, and follies which characterised the Second Empire throughout the last ten years of its ill-starred existence. That deservedly popular soldier, Colonel Verly, whose name is still a household word in the French army, wrote to a friend: "Princess Metternich has made it the

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fashion to give dances in gardens converted into ballrooms, illuminated by innumerable coloured lights, lighting up trees, houses, and people by Bengal fires, thus giving the scene the appearance now of a veritable Eden, and anon the aspect of the realm of Lucifer."

These were expensive luxuries ; it cost the Metternichs from 60,000 to 80,000 francs to construct an aerial garden suspended from the first story of a house, and causing people to say that "Paris had become a modern Babylon, of which the amiable Princess Metternich was the Semiramis !" Spiteful persons, who perhaps had not been invited to these picturesque gatherings, whispered that "Pauline" had to economise in order to meet the expense entailed by these costly freaks, and had her diamonds remounted annually to make the Parisians believe that she had purchased new ones !

Her craving for pleasure carried the Empress away to an extent that made foreigners pretend to be shocked, and a severe French critic wrote of her that she "amused herself like a *lorette* who went to sup at the *Maison Dorée* with her last shilling." Poor Princess Metternich was asserted by the strait-laced to be Eugénie's aider and abetter in doing all the things which, according to those who failed to gain admittance to the Imperial circle, the Empress ought not to have done,

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while she very often left undone the things she ought to have done. At a more than ordinarily brilliant gathering in 1863 Princess Pauline appeared as an Incroyable of the period of the Directory, and her rival, the Comtesse de Castiglione, as Salâambo. The hair of both streamed down their backs, a gold diadem encircled their heads, the breast and arms of both were nude, and they wore gold sandals!

One of the most splendid of all the fêtes during the Imperial reign of a little over eighteen years was that given at the Hôtel d'Albe. The invitations were sent out in the name of the Duchess d'Albe, the Empress's only sister, but their Majesties were really the host and hostess. The Empress on this occasion had resolved to surprise the guests by going in "tights," and the leading Belgian journal, *l'Indépendance Belge*, published a description of the costume which, it alleged, would be worn by her Majesty. The paper was soon in the hands of the shocked Emperor, who took it to the Empress, and commented upon its unsuitability. After failing to overcome the Emperor's objections, the Empress agreed to wear a less striking costume, but unfortunately the *Patrie*, the paper then the favourite of the Court circle, had reproduced its description of the dress, and the Parisians were roaring with laughter over it. Sober-minded people, however, took another view of it, and asked

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themselves if the Empress had become insane. It certainly looked like it.

Some of the vile attacks which were made upon Princess Pauline during her more than ten years' residence in Paris were doubtless the result of her own determination to assume the position of the leader of French Society—not second even to the Empress, who, as a matter of fact, was not a success in the *rôle*. “I leave it to you, Pauline”—this was her almost invariable reply to her Austrian friend's proposals to “do something new,” heedless of what might be thought of it by unimaginative people, many of whom she had come to regard as social “outsiders”—as not a few were. She brooked no opposition by Cæsar's wife, who was a beautiful woman without ideas of her own. Perhaps her greatest defect was her arrogance, which was demonstrated when she insisted upon her suffering consort acceding to the desire of the crazy War Party in 1870.

When, if ever, she chooses to do so, Princess Metternich, better than any other living person, can give us the full story of the introduction of the crinoline and its disuse in 1868, “unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.” She was one of the first to discard it, and all the “cream of cream” followed her example. The Austrian Ambassador was, as noted, the inspirer of the great Worth, who went to and

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from the Metternichs' splendid mansion in the Rue de Varennes as in the misty past the celebrated dressmaker, Leroy, had attended upon the Empress Joséphine. Eugénie's irreverent suite dubbed the Princess "Madame Chiffon," and all adopted her style of dress, the *fuseau* (spindle) !

The Empress was no judge of art or of pictures ; however, she "painted" for the sake of amusement. The satirical Marquise de Taisey-Châtenoy said of her: "The Empress paints Épinal's drawings and then calls them water-colours !" In the summer, when life at St. Cloud was dull, Eugénie, who was not a bad rider, would mount her horse, and, with Princess Metternich for her only companion, canter off to Marly incognito. One day, when the Court was at the Tuileries, her Majesty, feeling duller than usual, set off to see how Paris looked from the top of an omnibus, accompanied by Princess Pauline. Both wore men's clothes, for in those days, the eighteen-sixties, the Paris omnibuses had no stairs, and passengers had to climb to the top on ladders. The ladies left the Palace by a private door, believing that in male garb they were unrecognisable. When, on their return, they had climbed down, a detective approached them and smilingly expressed a hope that they had had a pleasant outing ! The story was soon common property, and

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the Imperial escapade was severely criticised. To those who advised her to get rid of some of the numerous lovely creatures who seemed to pass their days and nights at the Tuileries, the Empress said sweetly: “The poor Emperor must be amused, and likes to see pretty women around him.”

Life at Compiègne was not seldom of the free-and-easy kind, and sometimes the conversation at the dinner-table was very unconventional. One evening, General Fleury was relating to the lady he had taken in to dinner, and who chanced to be Princess Metternich, a story of a not very delicate nature, when she begged him to stop, adding that one of the persons referred to by the gallant officer was within earshot.

At Compiègne there was much play-acting even before Princess Metternich made Paris her home. During her ten years’ residence in the capital she made the theatrical and musical performances “hum.” “Never before had we seen a woman with such energy and varied skill”—such was the unanimous verdict of the Imperial guests at the Royal *châteaux*, which the dashing Austrian Ambassadress turned upside down, the Empress acceding to her every whim and crotchet. Whatever she did or proposed to do was law. She was a slim, wiry woman, a welcome novelty, respectfully adored by Cæsar and admired

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by all and sundry for her talents and delightful audacity, which the staid, and sometimes prudish, English guests, when “alone by themselves,” ungraciously termed “cheek.” There were occasional performances by the brilliant companies of the *Comédie Française* and the *Gymnase* (“the Bernhardt” was not yet the vogue, but in 1867, three years before the downfall, she had appeared in Paris theatres and was regarded as a promising actress, who, in time, would surely “arrive”). But the “intimate” plays, concerts, and charades were reserved for the delectation of the personal friends of the Imperial pair. These waxed enthusiastic over Princess Metternich, *grande dame* and *comédienne*. Under her direction the stage, at Compiègne in particular, was fitted with accessories borrowed from the great lumber-room, which contained everything that was necessary for stage use. The stage-manager was the celebrated architect, Viollet-le-Duc, who has described the grounds and the Long Walk at Windsor as the most superb landscapes he had ever seen.

The amateur artistes at Compiègne in those palmy years of triumphant Imperialism were Pauline de Metternich-Sandor, the Marquise de Galliffet (the beautiful wife of the leader of the astounding cavalry charges at Sedan in 1870), Laure de Rothschild, the Baronne de Poilly, Comte d’Aguado, the Marquis

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de Caux (still a well-remembered name), the Vicomte de Fitz-James, the Comte de Solms—briefly, an *élite seigneuriale*. The Empress once appeared in a piece called *Les Portraits de la Marquise*, by the celebrated Octave Feuillet; but she did not “score,” for the reason that she was utterly devoid of talent.

Thérésa, of café-chantant celebrity, who attained her zenith during the last decade of the Second Empire, was only seventy-six (eleven years younger than the Empress Eugénie) when she died in May 1913. The *Times*, which honoured her with an obituary notice, explained that she was Mme. Valladon, and gave up the millinery business to appear first as a singer of sentimental songs and then as a parodist of those ditties, “thereby becoming the predecessor of Mme. Yvette Guilbert.” But I should say there were parodists long before Yvette, or even Thérésa, was ever heard of. The *grandes dames* imported Thérésa into their *salons*. Her *Memoirs* (published in 1865) were said to have been written by Albert Wolff (of the *Figaro*), Ernest Blum (the French John Hollingshead), and Henri Rochefort. Thérésa came out in the eighteen-sixties. I heard her in the 'seventies and 'eighties, and remember how violently she and others were attacked by the celebrated Catholic journalist, Louis Veuillot. The songs which brought her most fame were

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the “Femme à Barbe,” the “Gardeuse d’Ours,” “C’est dans le nez qu’ça m’chatouille,” and “Rien n’est sacré pour un Sapeur.” She had a great admirer, and imitator, in Princess Pauline de Metternich.

Yellow being the Austrian national colours the Princess had the wheels and body of her carriage painted in that hue, while even her coachman’s livery was black upon yellow. Finding, however, that the Duke of Brunswick’s carriage was somewhat similarly painted, she adopted grey in lieu of yellow. One afternoon, as she was taking an airing in the Bois de Boulogne, the Parisians’ Hyde Park, she saw men raising their hats to a lady in a victoria painted also in grey; seated in it was a notorious person; in fact, an *impure*. Pale with indignation the Princess drove back to the Embassy house in the Faubourg St. Germain, and did not leave it until her carriage had been repainted in still another colour!

But these were the merest trivialities by comparison with the next step taken by the lady from Vienna to secure pre-eminence in French Society. She discovered that the Parisiennes did not know how to dress! She disdained the *falbalas* so dear to the French Court. It was her mission, she believed, to free Frenchwomen from the odious yoke which caused them to dissimulate their charms

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under heavy mantles and gowns, to make walking a penance when weighed down by garments heavy with ornaments, and to imprison their waists in those hideous crinolines. These latter had recently taken a most exaggerated form, principally, perhaps solely, because they had been favoured by the Lady at the Tuileries, who, however, soon discarded them.

A *belle dame* wrote to a woman friend : “ Do you know Princess Pauline ? I must present you to her. After yourself she is my greatest friend and the latest recruit of our leaders of fashion. I met her for the first time at Comtesse Walewska’s, the Foreign Office, you know. Her physiognomy struck me immediately as sympathetic. She reminded me of my dear little dog, Marquesita, whose death almost broke my heart. By chance we took leave of our hostess together, and went into the cloak-room. I knew she was Princess Metternich, and stood aside deferentially to let her enter the antechamber first. In recognition of my little civility she stopped and looked me full in the face—then held out her hand. ‘ Shall we be friends ? ’ she asked. ‘ I see by your face that we shall understand each other.’ When I had replied very civilly, in recognition of her position, she pointed to the closed door of the *salon*, where our hostess was receiving another bevy of very

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great ladies, and said, ‘Have you seen the waxworks? Ah! how I yawned! The ladies ought to have been thoroughly pleased with me, for I let them do all the talking, answering all their questions with one word,—yes. Can you guess what I was thinking about while they were chattering? I was realising how these fine ladies, the old and the young, would look if I undressed them! This is one of my manias—I must strip of their clothes all the humans I meet! Take your own case. It is as clear as daylight to me that under your skirts there is £5,000 or even £10,000 a year! You don’t laugh. I do,’ and she had to stuff her handkerchief into her mouth to stop her laughter. Then she said, ‘I count upon you to help me to strip these lady-bankers, these mummies. *Que voulez-vous?* I am gay. *Hop!*’ And with that she put her hands on the floor—the Foreign Office floor; only fancy it!—and turned head over heels in the presence of the lackeys who were helping her on with her pelisse! By the time we parted we were calling each other by our Christian names. It strikes me that the world of diplomacy is undergoing a change.”

In 1886, eighteen years after Princess Metternich and her husband, the Austrian Ambassador, had left Paris, the Princess opened Vienna’s first flower-show, and was the idol of the day when she drove along

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the Prater, the Hyde Park of the capital. No Austrian Sovereign had ever been accorded so magnificent a reception. One famous writer entitled her “Our Lady of Vienna”; another, “The Real Man of Vienna”; and another styled her “The Incomparable.” A song, written “round” her, was sung in the streets. One verse, still remembered in starving Vienna even in 1921, ran :

Es giebt nur a Kaiserstadt,
Es giebt nur a Wien ;
Es giebt nur a Fürstin,
Es ist die Metternich Paulin !

(There is only one Imperial city—Vienna. There is only one Princess—Pauline Metternich !)

Of the celebrated diplomatist, Prince Metternich, who died in 1859, the year of his son’s appointment as Austrian Ambassador to France, there is not a little *gup* in the third volume of the *Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield*, by W. F. Monypenny and G. E. Buckle.

Disraeli writes to Lady Londonderry : “Grosvenor Gate, May Day, 1848.—Have you yet recovered the great catastrophe? . . . The King of France [Louis Philippe] in a Surrey villa, Metternich in a Hanover Square hotel, and the Prince of Prussia at Lady Palmerston’s! [That Prince became in 1871 the Emperor William I., grandfather of the

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ex-Kaiser of the present day.] . . . Did you hear of Lord Hardinge's interview with Metternich on the 9th of March? Lord Ponsonby and P. [Prince] Esterhazy both present and listening as if to an oracle, while Metternich announced that Austria never was so sound, while he moralised over the miserable fate of the French. Esterhazy kissing his [Prince Metternich's] hand, like the Emperor's, when he quitted the room! Lord Hardinge told me this."

"On May 17" (writes Mr. Buckle), "Londonderry, who had been Ambassador in Vienna, took Disraeli to Eaton Square to introduce him to Prince Metternich. This eminent man had been mainly responsible for the policy for nearly forty years. . . . He was now seventy-five years old. Disraeli had long admired the serene intelligence of the profound Metternich! The attraction seems to have been mutual. Metternich was living as a hermit, in Londonderry's phrase; but, though he saw few others, he saw and corresponded with Disraeli frequently. 'I have seen Metternich twice,' Disraeli writes to his sister on the 30th of May, 1848. 'He talks very much, and is very kind.' Metternich's wife, Princess Mélanie, notes in her diary for May of this year that a complete understanding was at once established between the two men. They agreed in deplored the

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socialistic doctrines which were promulgated from Paris, in wishing to stem the revolutionary tide throughout Europe, and in reprobating Palmerston's policy of constant interference, in the interests of Liberalism, between Continental Governments and their peoples. Two speeches of Disraeli on foreign affairs, in June and August of 1848, were clearly made under Metternich's influence ; and Princess Mélanie's diary shows the importance which Metternich attached to both of them."

The first, on the 5th of June, arose out of an awkward complication with Spain ; the second speech (of which Mr. Buckle gives a long account) was delivered on the Foreign Office vote in supply on the 16th of August, and dealt mainly with British relations with Rome, Naples, Sardinia, and Austria. "In this speech, which Disraeli himself thought would make a noise, and which Greville calls 'very brilliant,' and Hobhouse 'amusing and striking,' there were, according to Princess Mélanie Metternich, certain expressions which Palmerston maintained could only have been furnished to Disraeli by her husband ; and Metternich certainly called the particular attention of the Austrian Foreign Office to it, and pointed out that '*ce grand orateur*' had borrowed from him the idea of the difference between political and sentimental

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mediation, the first based on treaties, the second on nationality."

Writing to Lady Londonderry on the 30th of April, 1849, Mr. Disraeli told how on the previous day he "went to pay a visit to the Metternichs. They live in a most charming old house on Richmond Green, called the Old Palace. Nothing can be conceived more picturesque. . . . I met there Duchess of Cambridge and the Coloredos. On the Sunday in August before leaving London for Hughenden" (Disraeli writes) "I went to pay my adieu to the Metternichs. . . . The Princess was making lint for the Austrian wounded Brunnow with her, 'whispering at the ear of Eve.'" Prince Metternich was "much altered, very extenuated . . . but his apprehension not less bright." Lord and Lady Palmerston were cordially received; "the Prince even went to the hall to welcome them."

In a delightful, undated letter, Disraeli, writing to Prince Metternich in August or September 1849, says: "I wish I could induce your Highness to find a total change of air and scene amid our Chiltern hills. . . . I would arrange that your despatches should come to you twice a day. Think of this, my dear master, seriously."

THE DAYS THAT ARE NO MORE

CHAPTER I

GRANDPAPA

(PRINCE CLEMENS METTERNICH)

(Reminiscences of my Childhood and Youth, 1845-1849)

ONE morning, when my grandfather—the Chancellor Prince Metternich—saw my daughter Sophie, who was then eighteen months old, playing at my feet, he exclaimed: “What I was really meant to be was a children’s nurse !”

I do not think that in any biography of the Chancellor mention has been made, or indeed could be made, of the talents he may have had in this direction.

This grandfatherly exclamation at the sight of his little granddaughter, who was also his great-granddaughter, will serve me as a clue for the difficult task I have here set myself. It is not of the Chancellor that I wish to tell: the Chancellor I never knew. I remember

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only the grandfather, the kindly, well-beloved grandfather. In all my jottings I have made it an unvarying rule to speak of persons and events only as I knew them, as they come within my own recollection. Let others treat of the Chancellor, the Minister, the statesman ; let others pass judgment on him ; I propose to deal solely with the man in his private capacity, with the grandfather, with his life, his activities, his influence in the circle of family and friends, with those whom I saw in his company and of whom I heard a good deal—in a word, to present my readers with the daily life of one who, as a father and grandfather, could scarcely have been bettered. Thus I will simply reproduce what I saw, heard, and experienced, that phase of him which came under my personal observation. Together with the portrait of grandpapa, a few reminiscences of my youth, up to the day of his death (June 11, 1859), shall be given.

The exclamation of my grandfather at the sight of his little granddaughter is quite typical of the man as he showed himself in all his relations with us : kind, affable, tender, affectionate, and fatherly. We all loved him beyond measure, and looked up to him as to the best of fathers, honouring him also as the patriarchal head of the family.

The bare idea of annoying him or disobeying him would have seemed to us an unthink-



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able sin. We all did what he told us to do, not from fear, but from love, and because we felt that in all his wishes and commands he had only our own good in view. There was nothing petty about him, and I cannot imagine anyone so easy and pleasant to get on with as he was. It is not everyone who understands so readily as he did how to go about with children, young people, and simple, nay, insignificant, persons in general.

His spirit communicated itself to others. It often happened, to the astonishment of other members of the company, that downright stupid people, in their intercourse with him, suddenly seemed to become quite intelligent, and not only asked sensible questions, but gave judicious answers. In his verdicts on the mental capacity, the actions, and the characters of his fellows, my grandfather's indulgence may really be described as limitless. He was never more tolerant than when opponents—and not merely opponents, but avowed enemies of his—were in question. Personal spite was entirely foreign to his nature. All who knew him will agree with me in saying that his greatness of soul was even more to be admired than his intellectual gifts. It would, indeed, scarcely be desirable if such loyalty and impartiality towards antagonists as he had made it his principle to display were often to be found. True, he

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detested the activities of the party of upheaval, and declared open war against it; but towards individuals whose opinions differed from his, and of whom he was justified in thinking that they followed from conviction a wrong and dangerous path, he was a lenient judge, and never bore them any personal malice.

His deep religious feeling, no doubt, did much to keep him from passing harsh judgments. He marched steadily on towards his life's goal, always seeking to purify himself, always looking upward, and one might truthfully say of him that every day he became a better man.

Among my earliest recollections of my childhood are the Christmas evenings at grandpapa's, the greatest of the many delights that fell to my lot. At seven o'clock, after the family dinner, which, as the custom was in those days, began at five o'clock, the doors of the great reception-room in the State Chancellery, with a superb, gigantic Christmas-tree in the middle, were flung open, and we rushed in, to revel in the countless lovely toys with which the huge room was crammed. The most beautiful toys came from old Baron Salomon Rothschild, who, in his deep attachment to the Chancellor he revered so highly, knew that he could give him no greater pleasure than preparing surprises of this kind

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for his children and his granddaughter. I remember an enormous doll's house, into which a child could go ; it had a parlour and a kitchen, both completely furnished. Another time there was a grocer's shop, and at another a switchback—it was enchanting ! Our dear grandpapa, who never got anything in all this bestowal of Christmas gifts, found his enjoyment in our happiness, and for his part made handsome presents to all, from the oldest to the youngest. Such are my reminiscences of the State Chancellery : it must be admitted that they are childish !

In the spring, about the 10th or 12th of May, my grandparents used to leave for the villa in the Rennweg, and there, on the 15th, my grandfather's birthday was celebrated. There was a great dinner-party, and after dinner I was allowed to put in an appearance, although, of course, I had already given him my birthday greetings in the morning. When the weather was fine, I found the whole company sitting on the terrace, where coffee was served. If the lilac was in bloom—as with us in Vienna is not always the case at this season—grandpapa was delighted, and took his guests round the garden, so that they might admire the glorious wealth of blossom. He was a passionate lover of Nature and of flowers, and would go into such raptures over the loveliness of spring as I have never, or hardly ever, heard

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from the lips of anyone else. The garden stretched from the Rennweg to the Modenese garden, and included the whole group of buildings of the Metternich grounds, as in those days they were called.

My grandparents remained in Vienna till the end of June, and then, unless prevented by the pressure of State business, went off either to Bohemia or to the Johannisberg on the Rhine.

Almost every day, just as at the State Chancellery, guests were invited to dinner at the villa, and every evening there was a reception. One day Fanny Elsler was among the guests, and I had the privilege of seeing her. My grandparents were very fond of her, for they admired not only her unsurpassable art, but the distinction of her personality, her appearance, and her engaging, exquisite manners. I can still see her sitting by my grandfather's side in the drawing-room, wearing a yellow silk dress and with a rose in her hair. What impressed me even then was the dainty way in which she kept her feet crossed. Grandpapa called me to him and asked : "Do you know who this lady is ?" "No, grandpa," I answered, and gazed wonderingly at that noble figure, sitting there so gracefully. And what a well-shaped head, what a delicately chiselled profile ! How beautiful Fanny Elsler must have been, to make so unforgettable

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table an impression on a child ! " Well," said grandpapa, " that's the famous Fanny Elsler ! Make her a nice curtsey, as you have learnt it from your dancing-master." I dropped my very best curtsey, and the Elsler declared that it did credit both to me and to my teacher. " Oh ! " I cried, " I can do a lot more ! " " Well, do the five positions," she said, and hardly had she uttered the words before I went through the five positions. " Up to now," remarked my grandfather to Fanny Elsler, " you have not been thrown into the shade by my granddaughter."

My mother, who was also an ardent admirer of the incomparable dancer, wanted me to see her on the stage, in order that I might realise the true meaning of dignity and genuine grace. It was settled, therefore, that I should be taken to the next performance of the ballet " Gisela ; or, the Willis." The impression was one neither to be described nor forgotten. To-day I still see Fanny Elsler before me, and I have a vivid recollection of the tears that were shed when the Willis, an ideal figure of beauty and pathos, sank into the grave, with her arms outstretched above her head. It was the dying of poetry itself !

My grandfather, to whom, no doubt, I gave a very lively account of my childish impressions, induced my mother to let me see Fanny Elsler in other ballets also. He

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held the wise view that the eyes of the young cannot be regaled too early with the sight of all that is fair and noble. I can say without hesitation that it was Fanny Elsler who awakened in me a love and enthusiasm for art.

During the summer of 1846 we paid a visit to grandpapa at the Johannisberg. I can recall two notabilities whom I met here—Alexander von Humboldt and Radowitz. Of the former I can remember only that he was short in stature and had a luxuriant crop of snow-white hair ; of the latter, that he had a miraculous “ gift of the gab.” Grandpapa said to me, in introducing Humboldt : “ Here is a mighty man of science, by the side of whom we are all ignoramuses ! ” As for Radowitz, I can only repeat that his loquacity was amazing. He went on like a waterfall, an endless stream of words poured from his lips. To me, of course, they were for the most part meaningless ; but they must have been very interesting, for the “ grown-ups ” listened with bated breath and seemed to be spellbound.

Then came the fatal year 1848, and one day—the 14th of March—the word went round : “ Grandpapa has to leave ! ”

My mother wept bitterly from morning till night. Gangs of men trooped through the streets, throwing stones at the windows, marching past the soldiers on sentry-go, putting

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out their tongues at them and uttering vile insults. I saw a grenadier with the high, splendid bearskin busby, whose post was near our house, at the entrance to the Bastion casemate, which then was still standing. He was pelted with the foulest abuse, but stood there like a rock, not moving a muscle, while his face grew paler and paler. What a terrible inward struggle it must have been for the poor fellow not to make use of his rifle against that crew of tatterdemalions ! I turned to my governess and indignantly exclaimed in French : "Idiots !" "Not merely idiots," she replied, "but brutes !" "I don't mean *them*," I retorted angrily ; "I mean the Government !" She smiled ; I did not know why. Long afterwards she told me that this condemnation of the Government sounded so quaint from a child's lips that it seemed as if I had an old head on young shoulders.

My mother, almost speechless with tears and indignation, told me that gentlemen from aristocratic circles had joined the revolutionary movement, and on the morning of the 13th of March had appeared at my grandfather's with the deputation which informed him, in the most brutal manner, that he must resign. Count B. and Count F. had been among the delegates, and had not removed their hats during the interview.

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What Count B. thought of his behaviour during later years I have never learnt. Count F., however, not merely regretted his conduct, but in 1852, when my grandfather returned to Vienna, came to him in person to offer his apologies. I need scarcely add that my dear grandfather never bore either of these gentlemen the slightest ill-will for the part they had played; in fact, that he had never even mentioned the affair.

My mother was in a state of painful anxiety about her beloved father and her stepmother,¹ until at last she heard that, amid discomforts and difficulties of all kinds, they had reached Holland and finally England. The Tsar Nicholas of Russia, in his loyal friendship and his recognition of all that my grandfather had done for Europe, immediately upon his arrival in England, placed at his disposal 100,000 roubles, with a note suggesting that, as Prince Metternich had had to leave Vienna in such a hurry, and everything was at sixes and sevens all over the Continent, he might find it convenient to have this amount of ready cash to draw upon. The generous offer was gratefully accepted, but only on the condition that interest at five per cent. should be paid on the amount until the repayment of the total sum. The Tsar was tactful enough to

¹ Mélanie, *née* Countess Zichy-Ferraris, third wife of the Chancellor.

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accede to this request, realising that the acceptance of the money as a gift was out of the question.

In 1849, in May, so far as I remember, we undertook the journey to England. My grandparents had spent the winter in Brighton, and for the summer had rented a house named the "Old Palace," at Richmond, charmingly situated by the Thames. Here it was that we once more joined our dear grandpapa, to stay with him until October. I used to spend the whole day at the house of a Mrs. Jenkins, who had some other little girls with her ; her pretty daughter gave them lessons, while she exercised a general supervision. Although I already had a fair command of English, I then for the first time mastered the more subtle points of the language, and also acquired a good pronunciation in Mrs. Jenkins's school, where nothing but English was spoken or understood.

From all quarters came a stream of faithful friends to the Old Palace, and if, unfortunately, my recollection of them is on the whole very faint, there are some personalities that I have not yet forgotten. First of all there were the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, who were living in a little Royal villa at Kew, close by, and who visited us several times a week. As particular friends of Austria they were most welcome guests. With them came their two

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daughters, the then Hereditary Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz and Princess Mary, mother of the present Queen of England (afterwards married to the Duke of Teck); their son, Prince George of Cambridge; and finally their son-in-law, the Hereditary Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. They were all the more inclined to show the deepest respect for my grandfather, in that they were bitter opponents of Lord Palmerston, who was then Foreign Secretary and displayed a partiality for revolutionary ideas. Moreover, they had no great liking for the Prince Consort, of whose tendencies, like my grandfather, they did not approve. Queen Victoria completely ignored my grandfather. She knew well enough that he had long since been displeased with the activities of her brother-in-law, the reigning Duke Ernest of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and that the latter's Utopian vagaries and Liberal views were little to his taste.

Besides these delightful members of the House of Cambridge, we often saw Princess Lieven, who was at one time so famous. She looked as if she had stepped out of some ancestral portrait. She was always dressed entirely in black, wore an enormous hat, had a green shade over her eyes, and carried a gigantic fan. So she paraded before us, stately and imposing, without so much as deigning to glance at us poor earthworms.

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In contrast to this dignified old lady, this emblem of European high politics, we used to see tripping along that celebrated belle of Vienna Congress days, Princess Bagration. She was the most extraordinary-looking person I ever set eyes upon, and our age, with its tendency to make everything conform to one pattern and one measure, must forego the pleasure—or the horror—of beholding so eccentric a being. She had forgotten the march of years, and seemed to think she was still in that glorious prime when Isabey painted her crowned with roses, wrapped in clouds and shrouded in veils! Only the veils and the roses remained ; the clouds, with her beauty, had vanished. Of her wealth of blond tresses, only some half-dozen yellow hairs were left. Her skin had become like a lemon, and her body—for one could see her body—was nothing but a creaking bag of bones.

The poor Princess was flimsily clad in a chemise of fine *batiste*, with two pink or light blue bows—that was all ! We went in fear and trembling, and uttered a fervent prayer that those loosely-tied bows might not come undone. Her weather-beaten little face was topped by a hat that a shepherdess of eighteen might have hesitated to wear. Thus dressed, if one can call it dressed, she appeared on her visits to my grandfather. The poor creature would indulge in all sorts of sly coquetties,

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and would throw him languishing glances. It was a sight for the gods to watch my grandfather, always so dignified and patrician in appearance, tow this poor shrivelled mummy on his arm to the table. She clung to him and gazed at him so earnestly with her watery blue eyes that, young and old alike, it was all we could do to keep from laughing outright.

Another lady, once famed for her beauty, the Duchess von Sagan, *née* Princess of Courland (known in her young days as the Duchess de Dino, niece of Prince Talleyrand), came to see my grandfather at Richmond, and also later in Vienna. She was very distinguished-looking, and always exceedingly well dressed, but in a manner suited to her years. What struck me about her more than anything else was that she spoke the most beautiful German : her voice was rich and mellow in tone, and the melodious note of her wonderful speech still rings in my ears.

At Richmond, too, I saw Benjamin Disraeli, then in the full vigour of his manhood. I am not in a position to say more about him than that I saw him very often, for in those days, while I was open to receive such impressions as the Princesses Lieven and Bagration and the Duchess of Sagan evoked, a man like Disraeli left me quite cold, however eloquent he may have been. I was still a child, and can tell

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of things only as they left their stamp on a childish mind ; on all that concerns more serious matters I merely picked up stray hints now and then, when we had to take a rest from our social duties—the unfriendly attitude of Queen Victoria, for instance ; Lord Palmerston's omission to call on us, and the antipathy towards everything connected with the houses of Coburg and Orleans.

Thirty years later I met Disraeli in London, and when we got into conversation he at once began speaking to me of my grandfather. "If I had been able to forget Prince Metternich," he remarked, "the force of circumstances would have served to recall him to my memory. All his predictions have come true, he really had the gift of prophetic insight!"

In October 1849, my mother took me back to Vienna, to go once more on a visit to grandpapa in the autumn of 1850, this time to Brussels, and to spend the winter there. England, in course of time, had become too expensive, and we had to economise. Of the "millions" which Prince Metternich, according to all the revolutionary newspapers of 1848, had put by, in order to deposit them at an English bank, I never heard anything, nor did I ever see a vestige of them later on, when I married my uncle, who himself had by then become heir to the whole estate.

We found our grandparents in Brussels,

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installed in the Hôtel Bériot, Boulevard de l'Observatoire, which was the property of the famous violinist, Bériot, the husband of Malibran, the singer. My mother rented a little house in the immediate neighbourhood. Soon afterwards my grandfather moved again, and took up his quarters in an old house in the Place du Grand Sablon, belonging to the Duke von Arenberg, while we came to lodge in the Rue des Meriennes, a narrow, gloomy lane, the very embodiment of all that was dismal. Of our stay in Brussels I have no very pleasant recollections ; perhaps this was because for three months I had felt far from well, in consequence of a persistent, very violent intestinal catarrh.

In Brussels the throng of callers on my grandfather was, if possible, even greater than at Richmond, and it would scarcely be too much to say that half Europe came to look him up. One day the well-known Socialist, Louis Blanc, was announced. My grandmother was furious, saying it was sheer impudence for such a scoundrel to set foot in our house. But her protests were of no avail ; my grandfather declared that he would be greatly interested to hear Louis Blanc expound his theories, and he was shown in. The representative of ultra-Conservative principles and the leader of ultra-Radicalism had a long discussion together. Neither convinced

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the other, but Louis Blanc was said to have admitted afterwards that, after all, he "found it difficult to refute Prince Metternich's arguments." However that may be, he was delighted with the venerable Chancellor, whose good nature and even temper in debate had left a profound impression upon him, all the more as he appears to have found him quite different from what he had expected. My grandfather, for his part, expressed himself in most complimentary terms on Louis Blanc's personality. This, again, made my grandmother angry: "Now he's even beginning to praise him!" she said.

The historian, Thiers, also called upon my grandfather, and had long conversations with him. He wished to be enlightened on various points in connection with the Napoleonic era, as he was just then writing his *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*. The following year he came to Johannisberg, in order to learn the exact tenor of my grandfather's discussions with the Emperor Napoleon. King Leopold was another frequent visitor, and often asked my grandfather for advice. As is well known, he was credited with being the chosen intermediary between the various Cabinets, and my grandfather considered him one of the best diplomatists he had ever met: very wary, very far-seeing, and crafty to the highest degree.

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In the summer of 1851, my grandfather betook himself to the Johannisberg. The Revolution had spent its fury, and its hated opponent could now go back to Germany. The Emperor Francis Joseph at once sent word to my grandfather that he could return to Austria as soon as he liked, without causing the Government any embarrassment. Accordingly he arrived in Vienna with his family in October of the same year, travelling from Linz by steamer, and was given a rousing welcome by all his friends and faithful adherents.

Thus we are all once more happily united in our old home, and could resume our family life undisturbed. We usually lunched at grandpapa's three times a week, and spent almost every evening at his house in the Rennweg, which became a rendezvous for all the diplomatic world, as well as for the whole of Vienna Society. Among the most constant guests were Field-Marshal Prince Windischgraetz; the poet, Freiherr von Zedlitz; the English Ambassador, Lord Westmorland, and his highly gifted wife; and the French Ambassador, Baron Bourqueney, to whose youngest son my grandfather had stood sponsor.

It often happened that after dinner, when my parents went to the theatre, or my mother had something else on hand, I stayed alone

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with my dear grandparents and had a pleasant chat with them, asked my grandfather for information on various subjects, and got him to tell me his experiences and of people he had met.

Immediately after dinner he would take a brief nap, which never lasted more than a quarter of an hour. Then he would read the evening papers, and when he was tired of reading would start talking with us. Had I been older, I should have turned this intercourse to better account, and should have had ample opportunity of obtaining sidelights on the period of his active influence. As it is, only a few things here and there have not slipped from my memory, and to-day I could shed bitter tears over my stupidity, which has made me forget so much. One of these stories greatly amused us. On the day when he was raised to the rank of Prince, October 20th, 1813, his valet, Giroux, asked him : " Will Your Highness put on the same suit as His Excellency wore yesterday ? "

Grandpapa liked to speak of Napoleon, whom he by no means looked upon as an enemy in the ordinary sense of the word. He was an enemy of Napoleon's lust of conquest, and regarded him as the scourge of Europe ; but even in this respect, as was always the case with him, his judgment was marked by absolute fairness, and he

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never failed to give Napoleon his due. He lamented the fact that a man of such towering genius had not been able to control himself better, and, after his successful conflict with the French Revolution, had not contented himself with restoring order in his country. How often he told us that there was no one so attractive and fascinating to converse with as the Emperor Napoleon ! He knew how to give an interesting turn to every topic, so that talking with him was a pleasure that never palled. The Empress Josephine, according to my grandfather, was good-natured, but rather insignificant, and mainly preoccupied with her clothes, on which she spent a mint of money. He described her daughter, Queen Hortense, as the most well-bred woman he had ever known, and said that for amiability, courtesy, and polish of manner she had no peer. The Princess Borghese was the most beautiful woman he had ever set eyes upon. She was so much in love with her own beauty that she spoke of it as if alluding to some other person, whose perfections she was praising.

As regards the Empress Marie Louise, my father did not care to express himself freely, but from what he said one felt that he was not greatly drawn towards her. When she started on her journey from Vienna to Paris, after her marriage by proxy, in the company

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of my grandmother, Eleonore Kaunitz, the Chancellor's first wife, and shed tears at leaving her home, her companion tried to comfort her, whereupon the young Empress answered : " Well, after all, dear Princess, it's what we Royalties have to put up with !" The wife of the great Napoleon might well have given a different answer. If Napoleon was a brilliant conversationalist, he could at times show a rudeness that was simply appalling. Whenever he met my grandmother, who was in poor health and anything but vain—and whose intelligence, by the way, he rated very high—he never omitted to pass some jesting remark upon her sickly look and her thinness ; as, for instance : " Ah, Princess Laure, we're getting old, we're getting scraggy, we're getting ugly !" She used to laugh at this, and he liked her for falling in with his humour, and would add : " There's no doubt about it ; you've got more brains than all those clodhopping women around you ! "

When grandpapa spoke of the festivities and dances in Paris during the First Empire, I was, of course, all ears. He told us that in the quadrilles such fantastic twists and twirls were then in vogue, that on one occasion one of the famous dancers, whom he desired to watch, asked him to go a little further off, because it was not at all unlikely that anyone

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standing near him would get hurt ! Those who have only seen the languid and ungraceful steps of present-day dancers can really have no conception of what dancing must have been like a hundred years ago.

My grandfather always expressed a very favourable opinion of King Frederick William III. of Prussia, and his consort, Queen Louise. He could not speak too highly of their beauty and charm, their affability and kindness. King Frederick William III. had exacted from him a promise to remain a loyal counsellor to his sons, and never to spare them the truth, if he thought it necessary to be frank. The promise was faithfully kept.

To go back to my grandfather's stories, I must not omit to mention those that concern the excellent Emperor Francis, whom he loved and honoured beyond words. He would laughingly describe to us the quartet evenings, when the good Emperor played the 'cello, and he himself the violin. At times the joint performance, it appears, was rather a halting one, and altogether would not have been exactly a feast for the ear, had any audience been present. Fortunately there was no audience for these quartets.

The Emperor Francis once asked my grandfather whether he had ever been fond of reading novels. The latter answering that

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he had not, the Emperor said he had never read one, and that it would interest him, by way of an experiment, to see whether a work of fiction could attract him at all. "Do get hold of a really interesting novel for me; we'll read it each for himself, perhaps we shall enjoy it," added the Emperor. The next day my grandfather sent a novel which all the world was then devouring, and both set to work. When Emperor and Chancellor met again, the former asked: "Well, do you like our novel?" "I must confess to your Majesty that I have not managed to get through more than twelve pages." "Well, you are braver than I," rejoined the Emperor; "I gave it up at page eight!"

It is indeed humiliating to have such scanty reminiscences of detached conversations, seeing that I was in a position to fill volumes with them. I can only plead my youth as an excuse. At that age, after all, one is not a very careful listener; if the conversation grows long and serious, one thinks of anything rather than of what is being said, unless one is directed by a teacher to pay attention.

Every evening, after the theatre, people flocked to my grandfather's drawing-room, and often the place was so full that one could hardly find a place to sit down. As my grandfather had become very deaf, he could not take part in a general conversation, and the

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person who spoke to him had to talk extremely loud, a fact which caused no little embarrassment to those who were shy. My sister-in-law, then still Aunt Mélanie, became engaged to a distant cousin, Count Zichy, and the wedding took place in 1853, in the family chapel. After the ceremony, all Vienna came to offer congratulations. When the guests were taking their leave, my grandmother—or rather my step-grandmother—who had been remarkably beautiful, and was still very handsome (she had a Greek profile and wonderful eyes, one green and the other blue), asked the French Ambassador, Baron Bourqueney, whom he considered the loveliest of all the women present. He replied : “ You, Princess, beyond all shadow of doubt ! ” Instead of assuming an air of false modesty, she said : “ Upon my word, you are right ! ”

The following year, 1854, the good and beautiful Princess died of a severe chronic disease, from which she had suffered since the birth of Lothar, her last child, without ever making the slightest complaint, though it must have caused her terrible pain and suffering. The loss was a crushing blow for my poor grandfather, but his strength of mind never deserted him for a moment. With simple, I might almost say child-like, resignation, he acquiesced in the decree of Providence, without ever parading his grief or letting it

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appear that he felt himself sorely tried beyond the common lot. When God had spoken, he could only be silent.

So life went quietly on. All sorts and conditions of men came to see him, some pleasant, others boring in the extreme. In the latter category we placed Professor Zahn, who had written treatises on Moorish art : he used to drive us youngsters to despair by taking the arabesques of the Alhambra one by one, describing and explaining them. Another portentous bore was Professor Sydow, a Himalayan explorer, who would strum on the piano with one finger in order to give grandpapa an idea of what the pipes of the Indian shepherds sounded like. It was an excruciating performance. But the palm for tediousness and rant was undoubtedly borne away by the Orientalist, Freiherr von Hammer-Purgstall. He would begin something like this : "The language of the Arabs is full of imagery—for one thing, for one object they often have a thousand words and phrases. Let us take for example the camel. For the camel alone the Arabs have four thousand equivalents. I will begin with the first : 'the ship of the desert.' " . . . We would quietly slink out of the drawing-room and leave poor grandpapa alone with the man of learning. An hour later we would peep stealthily into the room and, to our astonishment, find the latter still holding

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forth, and grandpapa still listening with the utmost attention.

One day, to the joy of our dear grandpapa, there appeared Prince Belgiojoso. In Rossini's heyday he had been accounted one of the finest tenors of his time, and as such was still remembered by my grandfather. One of the first questions he asked was: "Do you still sing?" "Of course I do," answered the Prince, drawing himself up proudly. "Then I hope you'll let us have the pleasure of hearing you," said my grandfather, beaming with delight. The day and the hour were fixed, and the whole family was invited to come and admire the peerless singer and enjoy the melody of his voice. Our expectations were keyed to the highest pitch. The Prince appeared with an accompanist, and strode in triumph, self-consciously clearing his throat, to the piano. "What will you sing to us, my dear Prince?" asked grandpapa. "'Mira la bianca luna,' your favourite song," was the reply. Looking forward to a rare musical treat, my grandfather sat near the piano, absorbed in meditation, his eyes cast down, thinking of Rossini and of the song that was to burst forth from the princely tenor's lips. The pianist struck up the first chords, the singer opened his mouth, but all one heard was the accompaniment, and now and then sounds so faint and hollow that they seemed

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to come from somewhere far away ; it was, in fact, mere mimicry of singing—horrible ! We were on pins and needles. Grandpapa, who was, as I have already remarked, very hard of hearing, still sat there waiting and wrapped in thought. The voiceless singer had just uttered his last note, if note it could be called, when grandpapa turned to us and said : “When is he going to begin ?” My uncle Lothar and I—we were of the same age—burst into such a fit of laughing that we collapsed and rolled under the piano. We were at once turned out of the room, and had to make ourselves scarce until Prince Belgiojoso left.

My uncle Richard, who had decided musical talent, often had to play duets with me for grandpapa’s benefit. At his request, we usually chose the overtures from Rossini’s operas. He listened attentively to our strumming. I call it strumming because Richard, though an excellent player by ear, was bad at reading music, while I was a very moderate performer, so that it needed the indulgent ear of a father and grandfather to find any enjoyment in our efforts.

One visit that my grandfather received still stands out in my memory—that of the Empress Maria Anna, Emperor Ferdinand’s consort. It was at the Rennweg Villa. The Empress, who was staying in Vienna for a few days on her way back from Italy, wanted

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to see him ; but as she knew that he no longer attended levees and had not even paid his respects to the Emperor, she thought it would be out of place to summon him to her presence, and called on him instead. A more majestic figure than the Empress Maria Anna could not be imagined. She was every inch a queen. When she appeared in the hall, my grandfather stood before her, bowing very low. She graciously inclined her head, slowly pulled off the glove from her right hand, and offered him the hand to kiss, with a dignity that had to be seen to be believed. My grandfather kissed the Empress's hand with such a courtly air, and such heartfelt reverence, that this meeting left an ineffaceable mark in my memory.

In 1856, my uncle Richard came home on leave from Paris, where he was Secretary to the Embassy, intending to spend January and February in Vienna. Piano-playing and natural sympathy had drawn uncle and niece together, and on the 7th of February he asked for my hand. Grandpapa was overjoyed at his son's decision, as were also my parents, although, to my mother, the idea of my marrying her step-brother¹ was rather startling. My heart still thrills at the recollection of the welcome I received when I

¹ By the Chancellor's second marriage with Antoinette, Freiherrin von Leykam.

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appeared at the Rennweg as a bride, and when my dear grandpapa, tenderly embracing me, said : “ I am still your grandfather ; you must not call me your father-in-law, for as grandfather I am nearer to you.”

So he remained for me “ grandpapa,” much to the confusion of many people abroad who did not know of the close tie of blood. It was long before my dear mother could get used to hearing me called “ Princess Metternich,” and one day, six weeks or so after our wedding, when someone asked her : “ How is Princess Metternich ? ” she replied : “ She is dead.” “ What ! ” exclaimed her questioner, “ dead ! —when did she die ? ” “ Three years ago.” Then the misunderstanding was cleared up.

Richard had meanwhile been appointed envoy in Dresden, and my dear grandpapa took great interest in the setting up of our new home. He proposed to share his silver plate with us, and ordered the list to be brought to him, with the division made out on a loose leaf next to the inventory. When both were brought to him, he read : “ Asparagus tongs, two,” and on the neighbouring leaf, “ For the young master and mistress, two,” so that for him none were left. “ It seems,” he remarked, “ that in my own house my Socialistic principles are pretty thoroughly applied.”

On the 30th of June, 1856, the wedding cere-

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mony took place before the Papal Nuncio, Monsignor Viale Prela, an intimate friend of the family. My step-grandmother's mother, the old Countess Molly Zichy-Ferraris, was to be present, but the day before she received news of the death of her brother-in-law, Count Ferdinand Zichy. She informed us that, to her regret, she could not officially appear at the wedding, but promised to come and remain in hiding behind the altar. This, however, as it turned out, was impossible ; for when all were assembled in the chapel and the Nuncio was putting on his vestments, my grandfather looked towards the altar, which was so close to the wall that there would have been no room even for a sheet of paper between the two, and said aloud (for, owing to his deafness, he did not know how to modulate his voice) : "Where the deuce can Molly have got to?" It was a marvel that Richard and I, in spite of the seriousness of the occasion, did not burst out laughing.

In the afternoon, after the wedding breakfast at the Rennweg Villa, we took a special train for my mother's residence in Moravia, and from there, a fortnight later, we went to Dresden. In August, grandpapa had everything ready for us at Königswart, where he gave us a most festive reception, and in his usual simple, cheery way enjoyed all that went on and took part in every entertainment, so

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far as his advanced age allowed. Though eighty-three, his mind was still as vigorous as ever, and he entered with a really youthful zest into all our fun, often laughing at our wild pranks until the tears came. His life in the country was so regularly planned and parcelled out, so well filled, that he was never bored for a moment. He got up at eight o'clock, dressed as carefully as if he expected visitors at that hour, had a cup of tea, and then immediately sat down at his desk, where he read the newspapers and then wrote letters. His handwriting was still clear and beautifully formed. In fact, he had kept all his mental faculties unimpaired, and read with the same keenness and perseverance as in his younger days. He simply devoured every interesting book that came out, and could pore over literature for hours at a sitting. He used to laugh so heartily over *Charivari*, issued in Paris every Saturday with the drawings of that past master of caricature, Cham, that we had to join in the laugh, without knowing what had provoked his mirth. Every afternoon he went for a walk in the park, and enjoyed, with rare enthusiasm and sensitiveness to impressions, the beauties of Nature that it offered. On Sundays and festival days he regularly attended Mass and devoutly read the Epistles of St. Paul, for which he had a great admiration.

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There was one favourite sport of ours that never appealed to him—hunting. He held it in abhorrence. When the game that had been shot was brought home, and he happened to catch sight of it, he would look at it with a glance of pity, and never failed to express his regret in some such phrase as, “Poor creature!” or to reproach us with our cruelty. His love of animals was so great that he even had a kindly feeling for bothersome creatures like flies, and when he saw any on the window-pane would actually open the window to give them their liberty. Once, at Königswart, we found him removing an open mouse-trap and putting a lump of sugar at the mouse-hole. When we remonstrated with him, saying that “it was really too much of a good thing, and that he was breeding mice,” he confessed to us that the mouse that appeared every day in his library was uncommonly clever, and that it would be a pity to do her any harm. He added: “She comes every day for her sugar and has already brought a comrade.”

In the evening, when in the country, grandpapa used to play whist. As, however, his attention was constantly diverted from the game by his thinking of other matters, he was, as Richard often said to me, “a trying partner,” and, much to his amusement, he came in for a good deal of scolding.

In the October of the year of our marriage

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grandpapa paid us a visit on his return journey from Königswart to Vienna, and seemed to be delighted with our home.

Once more, in January 1858, we visited grandpapa, and that, too, at the Johannisberg. It was his last stay in the country. In the spring of the following year, 1859, the war-clouds began to lour on the horizon, and my grandfather saw with deep misgivings the dangers that a war between Austria and Italy would bring in its train. One day the Emperor Francis Joseph came to him, in order to obtain his advice on the political tangle. "For God's sake," said grandpapa, "no ultimatum to Italy!" The Emperor replied: "It went off yesterday."

His presentiment that such a war would have the most serious consequences for Austria, wrought him up to such a pitch that his health, hitherto so excellent, was undermined. We could no longer hide the painful truth that his days would shortly be numbered. He still often saw the Foreign Minister of the day, Count Buol-Schauenstein, and even had the honour of receiving his Emperor at his house. These meetings and discussions were so great a strain on him that afterwards we always found him utterly exhausted. War was declared, and Richard was ordered to proceed with the Emperor to headquarters at Verona as diplomatic aide-de-camp, in order

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to lay before him the reports of the Foreign Minister and communicate the Imperial decisions to Vienna. Paul was in the army, and with his regiment of Savoy dragoons was taking part in the campaign. Both Richard and he were destined never to see their father again in this world.

My grandfather followed the news from the front with unremitting interest, but, owing to the frequency of bad news, with an ever-growing sense of pain and sorrow. His mental faculties had not weakened in the slightest degree, and thus we found it impossible to keep anything secret from him. He read the newspapers every day, and had a complete grasp of the situation, characterising it, on the very eve of his death, as a desperate one.

On the morning of June 11, he wanted to get up as usual—he had not spent a single day in bed—but his legs failed him, and he told his valet that he felt too weak to stay up, and must go to bed again. The old servant ran out in dismay to send us word, and summoned the family physician, Professor Dr. Jäger.

When we came in, we saw that we must be prepared for the worst, that the eternal farewell was at hand. A Franciscan Father, who came to the house every day to read Mass in the chapel, had just arrived. Professor Jäger, who came soon afterwards and saw that

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the end was near, asked the dying man whether he would not like to see the Father, a question to which he joyfully and thankfully answered that he would. When our dear grandpapa was receiving extreme unction, we all knelt in tears at his bedside. He was fully conscious. Noticing that Lothar was sobbing loudly, he motioned to him with his hand to stop crying.

Till his last breath he remained the same as ever, calm and considerate. When Professor Jäger, after the priest's departure, approached the bed, grandpapa smiled gently and indicated, with a wave of his hand, that his heart had almost stopped beating.

Thus did the much-abused Metternich system come to an end. Unswervingly loyal to his Emperor and to the Monarchy, forgiving his enemies, blessing his nearest and dearest, a staunch friend to his friends, and with a firm belief in the infinite mercy of his God, this man of lofty soul soon afterwards breathed his last.

CHAPTER II

“THE SANDOR!”

MY father was Moritz, Count Sandor, so well known, I may even say famous, as a horseman throughout the sporting world.

It may be that men as brave as he have existed, but I do not think there could ever have been a braver. My father was daring to the point of recklessness, and altogether what is best described as a “character.” For physical and mental courage, for straightforwardness and love of truth, one could scarcely find his equal. The slightest falsehood, the least touch of “brag” would move him to indignation. He was magnanimous and kind to his subordinates, though he could show an iron severity when he chose. This severity did not prevent them from loving and respecting him, or perhaps rather for this very reason they looked up to him as to a superior being. According to present-day notions, it is true, he would perhaps seem a trifle too tyrannical.

I went in great fear of my father, for his impetuous manner, his wild careering with mettlesome horses, his stentorian voice, which

‘The Sandor !’

he could raise to such a pitch that one could hear him about a mile off ; his tremendous strength, which he was always ready to have put to the test—all this was calculated to bewilder, even to terrify, a child.

My father told us that in his whole life, as far as he could look back, he had never known the feeling of fear. As a three-year-old child he already gave a sample of his fearlessness and his simply amazing energy. He was playing with a dog, and suddenly the dog bit him in the finger, so that the blood spurted out. Without uttering a cry, he took firm hold of the dog, bit off a piece of its ear, spat it out, and, pushing the animal aside, said : “ You bite me, I bite you ! ”

My grandfather, Count Vinzenz Sandor, occupied in Buda Pesth a house that was his own property, opposite the royal residence. It is still known as the “ Sandor Palace,” and is maintained as the official abode of the Hungarian Prime Minister, having become the property of the State. Count Vinzenz Sandor was a man of very stern demeanour, and, owing to severe attacks of gout, morose and difficult to live with. His wife, Anna Countess Sandor, *née* Countess Szapáry, an angel in human form, and remarkably clever, was the only person who had any influence over him, and it was always a restraining influence that she exerted. She did not succeed,

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however, in making the tyrant any gentler in his behaviour towards his children, and a regular reign of terror prevailed in the Sandor household. My dear father, who adored his mother, but unfortunately felt somewhat out of sympathy with his father, would never admit in later life that he had much in common with the latter so far as his temperament was concerned, and always declared that he took after his mother. He had, indeed, inherited his kindness and magnanimity from his mother, but the tyrannical, despotic side of his nature he owed to his father. Count Vinzenz Sandor had a private passage from his house to the theatre. Every evening he went to the play, and the order was given out that the children must every day make a formal request, if they wanted to be taken. But whenever the request was made, the only answer they got was: "I can't stand this perpetual cadging for favours!"

Little Moritz decided one day that he would no longer ask for this privilege, and after this, regularly at a quarter to seven sharp every evening, there was a terrible scene, and punishments rained down upon the stubborn youngster. This made no difference, however. He said to his mother: "I will not ask again. I don't want to be called a cadger."

He was as good as his word. Strange to say, my grandfather's appalling strictness was



COUNT MORITZ SANDOR

‘The Sandor !’

displayed only in trivial matters. In these he would pester his children unmercifully, while with their real upbringing and education he did not concern himself in the least. Thus it came about that my father, who was endowed by Nature with striking abilities, learnt nothing at all. Not till Count Vinzenz died and he became, at the age of seventeen, his own master, did he, on his own initiative, make up for lost time and attain knowledge by spontaneous effort.

He began to read, and what he read he remembered. At first scarcely able to write German, he acquired in a few months a German style that was not merely fluent but admirable, so that his letters might have served as models of their kind. In the same way, and also in a remarkably short space of time, he mastered French and Italian. Then he turned his attention to the piano ; and, although he had only learnt to “strum” a little, soon made such progress as to play waltzes and Hungarian airs, so that in company he was often asked to strike up a tune for the dance. Later he took guitar lessons, and composed little Styrian songs. The best and most faithful portrait of him in existence represents him guitar in hand. It is a life-size half-length portrait by Einsle, painted in the 'forties, and is now at Bajna Castle. As regards knowledge, he was able to atone for the deficiencies in

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his upbringing, but not in controlling and softening his ungovernable temper, which an unreasoning strictness had made still more ungovernable.

But, after all, who could or should have ventured to take in hand this high-spirited lad, who had become independent too early? His mother had been dead for some years when the news of his father's death reached him in Naples. He hastened back with all speed to Hungary. The guardian appointed by his father, Gabriel Count Keglevich, husband of his sister Matilda, at once had him proclaimed to be of age. My father now felt like a slave liberated from fetters he had worn for years, and it is certainly remarkable that he never abused the freedom which burst upon him with such suddenness. Apart from his madcap feats of riding or driving, he never did anything that could in any way have damaged his reputation or compromised him socially or financially.

Never did he gamble or drink a drop of wine. His health was extraordinarily sound. Apart from an attack of scarlet fever at the age of four, he had never been ill or even indisposed for a single day. When he had to keep to his bed, it was in consequence of a broken leg or a sprain. These accidents he met with very frequently, through falls from his horse or from a carriage. He fractured

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his right leg three times, both his arms twice, and his collar-bone and ribs times without number. The leg became so weak that on the slightest provocation it would get dislocated and have to be set. I cannot tell how many times this happened ; I only know that “Papa’s leg is out of joint again” became a very familiar phrase. At the setting of the bone he never even pulled a wry face, and when they did not tug hard enough he would quietly say : “Don’t be so gentle over it—I’m not made of glass!” For years he wore this unlucky leg in iron splints, and Velpeau in Paris and Ashley Cooper in London wanted to amputate it, declaring that atrophy would set in and that there was considerable danger of gangrene. An old peasant of the mountains near Blümbach entirely cured my father without an operation.

Count Vinzenz had never consented to let his son ride, drive, or hunt. In spite of this, he became—I believe the fact is admitted on all hands—the best horseman and one of the finest shots of the day, and was unequalled at handling the ribbons.

When my father came to Bajna, he at once took in hand not only the reins of government, but also those of his horses. Hardly had he left the carriage before he hurried into the stables and gave orders that a superb English thoroughbred, which caught his eye, should be saddled. His old tutor, one Kosztarovics, who

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had remained in the household and who, so my father maintained, had already been afraid of his pupil when the latter was seven years old, hazarded the remark that riding was a thing that had to be learnt, that one could not straightway mount a fiery horse, that his lordship would be thrown at once. "The man who has to learn riding," retorted my father, "will never be a good rider." Without more ado the young count swung into the saddle. To everyone's astonishment, he not only kept his seat quite easily, but seemed to be nailed to the horse, and made it frisk about as if he had been doing that sort of thing all his life. Then he gave orders for a bar to be held up, jumped over it, and finally directed that the saddle-girths should be loosened. In fear and trembling the order was obeyed, and this most daring of equestrians rode round on the loose saddle, then suddenly bent down, wrenched it away, threw it aside and leapt several times backwards and forwards over a hurdle, while all stood open-mouthed! . . . At last he dismounted, turned to old Kosztarovichs, and said to him: "You see I'm a born rider; what could anyone have taught me?"

From riding he proceeded to driving, and here too he proved himself a master. From the first day that he took the ribbons he became one of the best drivers who ever handled a team. Here, however, I must retrace

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my steps and observe that my father once before, while Count Vinzenz was alive, induced his head groom to let him drive a coach, and that with two horses that my grandfather did not care for, because he had found them too slow. My father got on the box, but instead of sitting still there he started the horses, drove off at lightning speed, to the horror of the head groom, and vanished out of sight. Then, from a distance, he caught sight of his father’s carriage, with its team of six, and without a moment’s hesitation the young daredevil overtook it and, respectfully saluting his parents, swept past. Count Vinzenz could scarcely believe his eyes. He was trembling all over with rage. My poor grandmother was deeply distressed. The coachman was ordered to turn back, and when they reached home they found their son at the foot of the stairs. “Who let you drive?” “I got on the box and started off without asking permission. The head groom isn’t to blame, I gave him the slip.” “Who taught you to drive?” “Nobody—I taught myself. I feel it in my bones that every horse must obey me, because I know how to treat horses. You see how those horses that you found too slow can travel when I drive them—I passed you easily.” “Silence!” thundered the old Count, and had himself carried upstairs. Hardly had he entered the room before he turned to my grandmother,

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who was still in a flutter, and said : “ The young demon is really a marvel with the ribbons. What a pity my coachmen can’t learn anything from him ! ” And the expected terrible scene never came off.

My father’s control over horses was truly remarkable ; he could do anything he liked with them. Later, when he had his own stables and inspected them every day, it was quite a regular thing, when he appeared and in his customary manner talked loudly and called to the animals by their names, for them to be affected—to put it as delicately as possible—with a slight gastric disturbance. They recognised their lord and master.

My father visited England, and there, too, his unrivalled powers as a horseman excited universal admiration. He had scarcely been a fortnight in the country before he was a notable figure in the sporting world. At Melton Mowbray he astonished everyone by his dash, his dexterity, his amazing fearlessness. The horse-dealers would ask him to try horses that no one dared to mount. One of the best known among them, Anderson, showed him a superb animal and said : “ If you manage to ride that horse at Melton without being thrown, I’ll let you have him for a song—for £100.” My father accepted the deal, and the horse arrived at Melton. At the meet he had him led aside and swung

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into the saddle. At once the creature started to rear, and a moment later he bolted. My father let him have his head; then suddenly—presumably owing to the rider’s skill—he calmed down, and when he was in a sufficiently chastened mood my father brought him back to the meeting-place, where the dealer was waiting, with a face the colour of chalk. My father came up to him at a canter, and said: “He’s a splendid horse; I’m very grateful to you for having got hold of him for me; you’ll have your money to-morrow.” Anderson turned to the large company that had assembled for the hunt and exclaimed: “That is not a man; that’s the Devil !”

When my father left England he passed through London, and one day, as he was walking down Regent Street, he saw a crowd gathered in front of Ackermann’s well-known picture-shop. He drew near and observed in the window a series of pictures representing a horseman in a red hunting-jacket, with the inscription: “Melton Mowbray. Count Sandor’s exploits.” The whole series is in my possession.

A year later (it must have been in September 1834, when my father happened to be in Bajna for the stag-hunting), a gentleman was announced of whom the valet said that he seemed to be an Englishman, and had come up in a fine post-chaise. In those days,

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when it took thirty-six hours to get from Vienna to Bajna, a traveller was a *rara avis*. My father, much astonished, went out to have a look at the strange visitor, and found a gentleman of very distinguished appearance, who addressed him as follows: "You are Count Sandor, I believe, who caused such a stir at Melton Mowbray last year? I have been told incredible stories about your riding and driving; but, as I wanted to find out for myself whether these reports are true, I have come all the way from England for this express purpose. I hope you will be good enough to show me some specimens of your skill in riding and driving."

My father was not over pleased at this somewhat unconventional way of introducing oneself, but he had been exceedingly well received in England, and knew that allowance must often be made for English eccentricities. Accordingly, like a true Hungarian, hospitable to the core, he invited the odd visitor into the castle and promised to do his best for him.

He started off at once, riding like one possessed, clearing all obstacles, and driving in such a way that all were speechless with amazement. The Englishman, whose name has unfortunately escaped my memory, seemed to be highly satisfied, but added, with imperturbable calmness, after every feat of horsemanship or driving: "Splendid!—but I think I have seen it done before." This was too



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much for my father, who had his best and most fiery team of five harnessed, and invited his guest to go for a drive with him. At full gallop they made in the direction of Visegrad, up a long slope which overlooks the Danube, and from the top of which one descends by a very steep, zigzag road. My father flicked the horses with his whip, and when the pace was at its hottest flung the reins on to the horses’ backs and asked his guest who sat there, trembling and deathly pale : “Have you seen *that* done before ?”

Of course there was a “spill.” The Englishman broke a few ribs, the two grooms had jumped off just in time, and my father, as he afterwards told the story, came off “quite unhurt—he only had the usual broken collar-bone.”

It was in Vienna that my father got to know my mother. Wild and untamed as he was, he at once took a liking to this most womanly of women. Her quiet, stately, dignified bearing, her intellect, and her physical beauty captivated him, and he pressed his suit. My grandfather was at first reluctant, and expressed his fears that a couple so divergent in character would never suit each other. My mother, however, reciprocated his feeling, and the marriage was decided upon. It was an enigma to everyone how my mother’s calm, reserved personality could inspire love and

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sympathy in my father. I find it easy to explain the riddle: it is generally the case in life that people so fundamentally different feel attracted towards each other. My father, who had such deep insight, may well have thought that only a quiet, level-headed woman would suit him, and on the other hand, as he was temperamentally an aristocrat through and through, liked good manners, and set great store—to a degree, in fact, that I have rarely seen in anyone else—upon a distinguished appearance, his choice was in every respect logical and judicious. To the end of her life he maintained a deep and unbounded reverence for my mother, a reverence that she peculiarly deserved. My parents had only two children —my brother Leo, who died in early childhood, and myself. The death of their dear little son was a blow from which they never recovered. Leo and I had to resort to all sorts of tricks in order to prove our courage and dexterity. We did all that we were bidden to do, but the courage was only external, for we felt mortally afraid, as, for instance, when my father told us to run on in front, and set on us his faithful hound Hector (of which, by the way, we were extremely fond), shouting to him: “Fetch them!” at the top of his voice. I still shudder when I recollect how we heard the hound behind us and expected every moment to be seized by him

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and knocked down. Of course he did not hurt us, but merely licked us good-humouredly ; for all that, however, we had some difficulty in recovering from our panic.

On another occasion we were in a meadow near the shooting-box at Gyarmath, watching our father as he took obstacles with one of his best jumpers. I blurted out the unlucky confession that I would not do that sort of thing myself at any price. My father heard me, and roared : “Put the child up beside me !” My mother stood there, numb with terror and amazement. The groom picked me up, set me on the horse beside my father, and four times we cleared the great barrier. Wonderful—but horrible ! I will not tell here of the hundred and one feats of riding and driving that my father performed. Most of them have been illustrated and have appeared as the *Sandor Album*, and are therefore sufficiently well known. All that is contained in that book is strictly true. My father’s two best friends, Count Edward Clam-Gallas and Moritz Count Pálffy, who had seen and taken part in many of these performances, often said to me, just after the album had appeared : “It can scarcely be believed, but there is not the slightest exaggeration in the book ; one might rather say that it falls short of the truth.” I believe, too, that no one ever equalled him in his unheard-of audacities.

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But it was not only with horses that my father was courageous ; he was no less fearless in dealing with men. When the Revolution broke out in Vienna in 1848, he showed himself in his true colours. Although his tremendous popularity then stood him in good stead, he did many things that proved that he did not know the meaning of fear. I remember how he once took me with him and led me by the hand through streets thronged by a yelling mob, in order, as he said, to show me that one must never be afraid. When we reached the Michaelerplatz, where, for I know not what reason, an enormous crowd had gathered, the cry suddenly rang out near us : “Long live the Republic !” Almost before the words were out of his mouth the speaker received such a box on the ears that he crumpled up at the church door, unconscious and streaming with blood. The box on the ear was dealt by Sandor’s hand, and as soon as the blow was struck there was a deafening roar of “Good old Sandor ! Bravo, Sandor !” Not till later, when I was grown up, did I realise to the full my father’s indomitable courage. This incredibly daring act convinced me that, by showing a bold front and a reckless contempt for one’s skin, one can more easily dominate the masses than by fair words. The populace—like women—really loves only those who put the fear of God into its soul.

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My father was “Kaisertreu”—loyal to the Emperor—in the fullest sense of the word. For his Emperor he would have sacrificed everything and let himself be hacked into bits. When the Revolution broke out in Hungary the revolutionary Government was disposed to confiscate his estates. This was told him, and he answered quietly: “Let them take them, then. I know my Emperor will give me and mine a crust of bread, so that we shall not starve to death.”

His popularity in Vienna, I repeat, had become a household word, and “the Sandor” had become, so to speak, a bit of old Vienna. To have been in the Prater and not to have seen “the Sandor” was the same as to have been in the Stephansplatz, and not to have seen the tower of St. Stephan’s. He could take any liberties he chose, and when he tore through the narrow streets and shouted “idiot!” and “blockhead!” at the passers-by who did not get out of his way quickly enough, all were delighted, treating the matter as a huge joke. In spite of his hasty manner, he could be the most friendly and engaging of men with even the humblest folk. He knew how to meet the lower orders on their own level, and no one could possibly be angry with him. He would talk to anybody, and would ask any chance stranger who gaped at him in wonderment to step into his carriage and

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drive with him. It happened once that in the Prater, where hundreds of people would always surround his carriage or horse before he started off, he caught sight of a fat man, staring open-mouthed, who attracted his attention because he looked out of his element. My father asked him : "What are you staring at ?" The crowd laughed. The man replied : "I see such a lot of horses here, and I wonder whom they all belong to." "Why, to whom else but to me ? Don't you know me ? I'm 'the Sandor !'" The fat man answered : "No, I don't know him—I'm from Krems." "Well," replied my father, "you'd better make his acquaintance. Come up here and let me take you for a drive." The crowd roared with laughter. The fat man painfully clambered up to his seat in the high phaeton, and as soon as he had reached it the horses dashed off at a furious pace. The poor fellow held on tight, screamed, implored my father to stop, and at last said : "You can't stop these horses, sir—they're simply running away." "Can't I ?" roared my father. "You old fool, just wait and see !" and then, with the team of four, he drove in and out among the trees, over the ditches—in a word, he went "like the devil." When the unfortunate stranger had been subjected to a good half-hour of this treatment, my father returned to his starting-point at the same frantic speed.

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The fat man shouted several times: “ You’ll knock all these people down.” “ Hold your tongue !” was the only answer he got. No one in the crowd moved, for all knew that “the Sandor” would halt at the right spot. And so it turned out. The fat man was put down, and when asked how he enjoyed the drive replied: “ Oh, it was splendid—‘the Sandor’ was such good company and I had such a jolly talk with him.” The crowd was electrified; but he who had been called an “old idiot” and told to “hold his tongue,” went back to Krems and represented these rather harsh terms as examples of “the Sandor’s” geniality.

One must come to the conclusion that my father’s too lively expressions of anger did not sound so offensive from his lips as if anyone else had given vent to them. I remember that his servants and subordinates not only revered him and rated him above all other men, but were almost proud to be called by him “old idiot !” or “blockhead !” For instance, an old keeper at Bajna, who after my father’s death entered my service, never omitted to say, when we went hunting in the forest: “ It was here that my late lamented master called me a donkey ;” and at another spot in the woods: “ I shall never forget that he shouted to me, as I came up to make a report to him, ‘ You’re a darned fool ! ’ ”

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and the old keeper said all this in a tone of affectionate reminiscence, baring his head.

In consequence of his frequent falls and a serious accident that occurred to him at Linz, where he was flung out of the carriage and knocked his head against an iron railing, a malady of the brain set in, and at the end of 1850 my father had his first fit of insanity in the Aristocrats' Club in Vienna. He wanted to smash everything to pieces, and had to be tied up before he could be brought home. Then he had to undergo medical treatment, and was taken to Dr. Riedl's private asylum in Prague, which was then considered the best. For six weeks on end he was raving, and it remained a mystery to the doctors that he survived that terrible ordeal. His vigorous constitution pulled him through. But from that time onwards till the end of his days his mental infirmity never left him, and when, after a lapse of eighteen months, he was able to return to his family he was a mere shadow of the man he had once been. He was not, indeed, debarred from social intercourse, and those who merely exchanged a few words with him did not notice his sad condition. In a long conversation one observed a trick of repeating old stories, nothing more. The Emperor and the whole Imperial Court never forgot my father's attitude of loyalty to the Reigning House. In particular, the Arch-

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duchess Sophia and the Archduke Francis Charles, despite the state of his health, lost no opportunity of asking him to come and see them, so that when he went to Ischl in the summer he was always immediately invited to dine at Court. With touching kindness and consideration the Archduchess Sophia always arranged that no stranger was invited on these occasions, in order that, as she charmingly expressed it, “he might have the pleasure of being able to tell his old stories undisturbed.”

It was heartrending to see this man, once so full of the joy of life, bubbling over with high spirits, and so brilliantly gifted with intellect, spend the evening of his days in such a tragic plight. The release came after twenty-eight years. He passed away on the 23rd of February, 1878. On the threshold of spring, when his body was borne to its last resting-place from Vienna to Bajna, four fiery black horses conveyed it from the station of Gran. Just before the hearse reached the church, the horses, for some unknown reason, took fright and bolted. The old coachman, who, in his younger days, had so often accompanied his master, managed to guide the horses towards the door of a barn, where they collapsed. After the funeral service had been performed at Bajna, the coffin was provisionally deposited there, pending the completion of the family vault at Gyarmath. When the building

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of this vault was finished, the coffin was conveyed to it with due pomp and ceremony. Here too, however, the incredible happened. Another team of horses bolted, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that they could be brought under control. It seemed as if all “the Sandor’s” horses wished to pay him the last honours in their turbulent fashion !

CHAPTER III

OUR FIRST DIPLOMATIC POST (DRESDEN)

As soon as Richard received his nomination as envoy to the Saxon Court, he asked for my hand in marriage. After the ceremony had been performed in the Nuntiatur Court chapel by the Nuncio, Monsignor Viale Prela, we went off to my mother's Moravian estate, and reached our ultimate destination, Dresden, in the middle of July. In Dresden we moved into the house rented by Richard and already fairly well furnished, in the Gewandhausstrasse. Next day our first visitor was Gustav von Gersdorff, the royal Master of the Ceremonies, who, as an inimitable type of a courtier *par excellence*, merits a detailed description. Gersdorff was a specialist in his own line, with a marvellous knowledge of Court etiquette, customs, and traditions. In all matters of social intercourse, and even in the criticism and designing of ladies' attire, he was an undisputed authority. Gersdorff's patronage at once stamped a woman as a "lady of fashion," for he never went about with one

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who did not know how to dress well. He had a frank contempt for ill-dressed women, and could say "She is very badly turned out" in a tone that sent cold shivers down one's back. The culprit was condemned as if by some all-powerful secret tribunal, and irreversibly doomed: for Gersdorff, at any rate, she no longer existed. Accordingly, his first visit to me was a sort of inspection. He seemed to be satisfied, for I was told a few days later that when asked about the new Ambassadress he replied: "She looks smart enough!" I was in his good graces, and remained so till the end of his life. He was always my faithful and devoted friend.

Soon after our arrival I had the honour to be introduced to Her Majesty the Queen of Saxony in Pillnitz about half-past six one evening. The Queen received me in her private apartments. She was a sickly little woman, bowed with the weight of care, not exactly lovable, but kindly. She had already lost several grown-up children, and her sorrow at these bereavements could be read in her face. Nevertheless she fulfilled the duties of her high station, and I do not think there ever was a single Court in Europe where so many banquets and receptions of all kinds were given as at the Saxon one. After the audience I was conducted into the ball-room, where I found a large company assembled. The wife of



PRINCE RICHARD METTERNICH

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the Prussian Minister, Countess Redern, *née* Odescalchi, introduced me to the ladies, and soon afterwards their Majesties appeared on the scene. The Queen's chief lady-in-waiting, Frau von Friesen, presented me to the King, that admirable King John, who won my heart from the first moment I set eyes on him. His exterior was not prepossessing, and one would have taken him for an old professor rather than for a Sovereign ; but on closer acquaintance one forgot his lack of outward smartness, and saw only his kind, yet penetrating eyes. They shone with such tenderness and benevolence that their look went straight to one's heart ; one felt a childlike affection for the King, and he left an impression that could never be effaced.

When the King had asked after my grandfather and requested me to give the latter his kindest regards and to say how pleased he was to see us at his Court, he ordered that the ball should be opened. My first partner was the handsome Karl von Lüttichau, who had been introduced to me by Gersdorff, whose personal friend he was. He was a first-rate dancer, and it was a real pleasure to whirl round the room with him. He in his turn introduced me to several partners, and I had a delightful time. Towards the close of the evening I danced again with Lüttichau. This friendship, so quickly formed, lasted without a break for

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thirty years, till it was ended by death. To-day I still think, with a pang of regret, of one who died before his time. Together with him, Gersdorff, Oswald Nostitz, Léonce Konneritz, Otto Konneritz, Heinrich Nostitz, Vero Blecinski, Count Vitzthum, Eberhard Solms, Bonar (an Englishman, brother of the Baroness Wüllerstorff), the Hohenthals, Hellendorf, the Seebachs, and Alexander Miltitz became regular visitors at our house ; in fact they would drop in any evening. Another frequent caller was Herr von Tschirscky,¹ one of the cleverest and most agreeable conversationalists I have ever met.

In our little circle of friends unconventional gaiety and never-failing liveliness were the prevailing note. They were glorious days, and, although forty-four years have passed since our last meetings, I often look back and think that it was the happiest period of my life. I was young and favoured by fortune, no troubles had yet befallen me, and I saw everything through rose-coloured spectacles. We were constantly devising amusements of every kind : private theatricals, tableaux, charades, fancy-dress balls, and in spring and summer we had delightful excursions in the charming country round Dresden. Sometimes in the evening we were asked, or rather com-

¹ Director of the Royal Saxon Railways, father of the German Ambassador in Vienna, who died there in 1916.

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manded, to go to "King's," as they used to say in Dresden, and at other times to the Dowager Queen Marie's, twin sister to our Archduchess Sophie, and so like her that one could hardly tell the two apart.

The evenings with Royalty were not very exciting, and I was, of course, too young and lively to find any enjoyment in them. I am sorry that I never had any serious, intimate talks with King John. I remember how once, when the conversation turned on teaching and education, his Majesty declared that he had derived great pleasure from teaching, since he had given lessons to all his children ! He added : "Not in reading and writing ; they had to know those thoroughly before they came to me, but after that stage I gladly took them in hand." "I suppose your Majesty was very strict ?" I asked. "Do I look so stern, then ?" answered the good King. "Well, if you think it very strict to insist upon close attention, I was strict ; but if anything was not grasped or clearly understood, and I was asked to explain it more fully, I praised the children for their keenness, and repeated my explanation till I saw that it had gone home. They were all good pupils, and Albert was particularly hard-working. He was exceptionally quick at taking things in." "Ernest was also a brilliant pupil," interposed the poor Queen. "Yes, Ernest was also," said the

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King, and they looked at each other, and a long silence followed. Prince Ernest, a promising youth, had fallen a victim, some years before, to an insidious disease. A sudden blood-poisoning had carried him off, like several other children of the Royal pair. It was said to have been a kind of typhus. Grand Duchess Margaret, the first wife of Grand Duke Karl Ludwig, Princess Sidonie, Princess Marie, and Duchess Sophie in Bavaria, all succumbed later to the same malady. In spite of all the bitter sorrow that had fallen to their lot, their Majesties, from a sense of duty, did not give up the annual Court festivities, and thus in the course of the carnival, according to its length, several Court balls, great and small, took place. The great Court ball opened with a *polonaise*, and I often had the honour of dancing with his Majesty the King. Now it is only a "walking" dance ; in those days one made a slight bow or curtsey after every three steps, somewhat after the fashion of a *pas de basque*. The King went through the ritual conscientiously. So, of course, did Gersdorff. Of those who did not do the prescribed steps, he would say : "They are people who have not lived at Courts : they don't even know how to dance a *polonaise* properly !" The King's aunt, Princess Auguste, was delightful in her old-fashioned way. She never missed any of these festivities, was always dressed as

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became her station, and wore magnificent jewels. She had a blonde wig with three little curls on either side, lace headbands with feathers stuck in them, and a wonderful tiara. She danced the *polonaise* with perfect correctness. It was rumoured that the Emperor Napoleon III. had sought her hand in marriage, and that she had refused him. Princess Auguste remained single, but held a Court, gave dinners, and used to say: "Even if I have never married, I am none the less a Royal Princess of Saxony, and as such I have a position to keep up." I had a great liking for the old lady. I have always been a stickler for forms, and I think Princess Auguste was also. One of her peculiarities was a terrible dread of contagious diseases. This went so far that once she would not visit a friend who was very ill in confinement because she was afraid of catching milk-fever! . . . On the other hand, the old Princess Amelia, a sister of the reigning King John, no longer went into society, and received visitors only at her own house. One was asked to dinner there at two o'clock, and this unearthly hour gave rise to much complaint. She was extremely clever and amiable, and was well known as an authoress. She wrote several plays, which were performed at the Royal Court Theatre, the Municipal Theatre, and elsewhere, and met with success. These highly moral pieces were bright and

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pleasing, but, strange to say, very bourgeois : they dealt with life in humble middle-class circles, and one was really astonished that a Royal Princess should be so familiar with the outlook, manners, and customs of this social stratum.

When the Archduke Karl Ludwig became engaged to Princess Margaret, and the wedding was announced for November 1856 in Dresden, we proposed to give a great ball, and, as our rooms were not large enough, decided to build a dancing-hall.

The preparations began in October, and this was the first entertainment on a large scale that I had occasion to organise. When people are astonished at the light-hearted way in which I set about arranging festivities, I can only point out that after forty-four years' experience one is not likely to quail before such a responsibility. The hall, which, by my design, was decorated with silver ornaments and blue satin, was universally admired, and I may say without conceit that the effect was really charming. A lavish display of flowers had contributed towards making this hall, as well as the adjoining drawing-room and the staircase, look almost fairylike. Everyone was enchanted, all the more so as in those days the use of flowers and plants in the decoration of living-rooms and reception-rooms was not so widespread as it is to-day.

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We had sent out over twelve hundred invitations. The King and Queen, and all the Princes and Princesses of the Royal Court and of all the Saxon Courts, were present. No one was happier over the success of the ball than my loyal friend and admirer, Gersdorff. The series of festivities was closed by a congratulatory levee at Court and a gala performance at the theatre, and the happy pair went off on their honeymoon. Princess Margaret, although she had regular features, could not be called pretty, for she looked too fresh and healthy and lacked grace. That fresh look of hers deceived us all, for very shortly after her marriage she died, and that, too, as I have said above, of the same insidious disease—a kind of blood-poisoning—that had claimed, and was still to claim, so many victims among the children of the Saxon Royal House.

The Saxon Court was the only one where the New Year's reception was held in the form that was followed there. On the lines of the *jeu du roi* as practised in France in the time of Louis XIV., Louis XV., and Louis XVI., card-tables are set up in the throne-room, and at each of these a member of the Royal Family, including the King and Queen themselves, presides. The Diplomatic Corps, Ministers, and high officials are invited to form themselves into parties for playing whist at these tables. On the 1st of January, 1857,

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I had the honour of being the King's partner. His Majesty asked me whether I often played whist, whereupon I made the shamefaced confession that I had not the slightest inkling of the game. "Never mind," said the King, smiling, "Gersdorff will stand behind your chair and show you the cards that you have to play." The game started, and Gersdorff acted as my mentor. For one moment, however, he forgot to show me how to return my august partner's lead, so that as third player I followed up a two of hearts with a three. The good King exclaimed: "You mustn't be so modest as that in playing cards!" And Gersdorff, whose attention was once more directed to my hand, whispered to me: "That was very bad play!" I was, of course, covered with confusion, but was soothed by the King's words: "Next year you'll be a splendid player, especially if Gersdorff coaches you!" The upshot of this remarkable evening was that I lost five shillings.

While the game was in progress all who were present at the reception would walk past their Majesties, who would continually look up from their cards and nod graciously to their profoundly bowing guests. The aspect of this room, crowded with card-tables; the ladies with their Court trains and tiaras; the gentlemen in gala uniform, and

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wearing all their orders, walking past or engaged in the game, is exceedingly impressive. The throne-room is in itself so magnificent in its old-world style ; the old red tapestries on the walls, with the gilt-framed pictures, the sconces of embossed silver, in the form of huge mussels, each containing five tapers (in those days wax candles were the only means of lighting used at Court)—all this gave the room a peculiarly imposing aspect. Beautiful, too, are the old silver candlesticks that stand upon the card-tables, and of which the palace possesses hundreds. I always remember with a thrill of delight this tradition, handed down from an age that, alas ! has long since vanished.

The balls, both formal and informal, were also held at the Saxon Court in accordance with long-established tradition. Before the opening of the ball came the introduction of strangers by members of the Diplomatic Corps ; then the Court went into the great ball-room, which afterwards underwent extensive alterations, and became very bright and splendid ; whereas, then, with its dull modern frescoes and dark panelling on walls and ceiling, it looked ugly and uninviting. As soon as their Majesties had entered, the famous *polonaise* was played, and after this came the first waltz, which I generally opened with the Crown Prince, the future King Albert, who

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was an excellent dancer and passionately fond of the art. The lovely Princess Karola (*née* Princess Vasa of Sweden) also revelled in dancing, and even the grave, stiff, and none too genial Prince George would unbend to some extent on these occasions. At midnight all trooped into the supper-room, the apartment in which the New Year card-parties were held. Nothing more grand, beautiful, and truly royal can be imagined than the arrangement of the supper buffet at the Dresden Court: the old-fashioned room, the gigantic horseshoe-shaped table with its superb plate, candelabras, branched candle-brackets, knives, forks, and spoons with the initials A.R. (Augustus Rex), even the table-linen with the same enormous lettering, the two sideboards with their beakers and goblets, and the great golden lion, emblazoned with the Saxon coat-of-arms. These sideboards had been set up in this style in the time of King Augustus the Strong, and the magnificent objects with which they were stocked from ceiling to floor were placed there in exactly the same way under that Monarch, who had three designs made which the arrangement was to follow, and his plans were maintained until the great war in 1914. One felt as if one were transported into another age, an age in which I should have been glad to live.

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During the ball ices, drinks, and sundry refreshments were served at a huge buffet known as the "sweet buffet." The Court confectioners had always constructed some fancy cake representing a castle with its gardens, a villa with flower-beds or peasants' cottages, and it was a recognised amusement to stroll over there and see what was their latest device. They did their work skilfully, and although the decoration was not very tasteful according to modern ideas, I liked the old-world air of it all. As far back as the oldest Dresden Court habitué could remember, it had always been like this, and Gersdorff used to say, with a pious glance heavenwards, "May it always remain so!" The "chamber balls" were distinguished from the Court balls, first by being held in the Queen's private apartments, and by their strictly limited number of invitations, secondly by there being a sit-down supper, which was as bad in King John's time as it was afterwards good. The M.C. was Riding-Master von Mosel, known as "the ruin of *cotillons*," because he had led the *cotillon* for generations. After the *cotillon*, the great Court ball was wound up by the so-called "Grand-father," a dance that I always enjoyed above all others. I danced it with such ardour and abandon that the stern old stagers, it seems, took exception. King John, when this came

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to his ears, said : “Leave my little Metternich alone. She is young and lively and makes things hum when they are beginning to get dull.” So I went on dancing merrily, blissfully unconscious that I was arousing adverse comment.

As colleague in the Prussian Diplomatic Corps we had the Rederns, who lived in the beautiful Moczynski Palace. This palace, unfortunately, is no longer in existence ; the Moczynskistrasse now cuts across the site where it once stood. The Rederns gave excellent dinners, and altogether had a very large number of visitors.

Redern was on the best of terms with Richard, so that we often met. The Bavarian representatives were the Gisers. She was by birth a Countess Tascher de la Pagerie, a very clever woman, but rather abrupt in manner ; he was not a man of brains, but of a very gentle disposition, and played a somewhat subordinate rôle as “mari de sa femme.”

At the French Embassy were the Forth-Rouens. She was a Portuguese by birth, rather gipsy-like in appearance, very lively, and quite a pleasant woman. He was rather loud-voiced, a trifle plebeian, and a colourless personality. The poor man never slept, or hardly ever, that is, not more than an hour a night, and his eyes were so weary that one

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felt like going to sleep as soon as one looked at him.

Russia was at first represented by old Baron Schrdter, a valetudinarian, who at the last moment would put off invitations if an east wind was blowing ; England by Mr. Forbes, a corpulent bachelor and professed woman-hater, with a passion for collecting old Saxon china. One day, at a Court ball, when a gentleman near him said : "The Countess Hohenthal is looking remarkably beautiful this evening," he replied : "That may be, but I find all women repulsive!" "You are fortunate indeed !" exclaimed his companion. Schrdter soon resigned his post, and was succeeded by Prince Volkonsky, whose wife, *n e* Baroness Lilien, had a perfect craze for entertaining. In one of her reception-rooms she had a stage set up, and about once every three or four weeks a performance was given. She got together all those in her circle who had, or fancied they had, any talent for acting, and organised an amateur dramatic club, of which Richard and I, as well as Countess Redern and the Gisers and a host of others, were members. We had to promise faithfully not to leave her in the lurch, and the theatricals then went on in full swing. The members were all docile and followed the directions of the manageress with blind obedience. I think our company must have

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been unique. The first piece performed was "Embrassons-nous, Folleville," in which I took the part of the *jeune fille*, while Richard was the bridegroom. We were a tremendous success, or rather we won tremendous applause (the King and Queen and the Crown Prince and Princesses were among the audience), not so much because of our, no doubt, very mediocre acting, as because we often had to kiss each other and did this with gusto, so that at every embrace the spectators all clapped loudly, and the good King was heard to exclaim: "A pretty pair! Bravo!" The real success, however, apart from our kissing, which made no great demands upon our histrionic powers, was a minuet, which—I think I may say without laying myself open to the charge of vanity, now that so many years have elapsed—we danced exceedingly well, and for which we had two encores. Richard excelled himself in graceful and elegant bowing, and after the performance Gersdorff rushed up to me and exclaimed, as with a large handkerchief he dried his eyes (filled, as usual, with apparent tears—it was really only water): "You two still know how to bow and curtsey; everyone else has forgotten the art!" Raising his arms heavenwards, he hurried on.

Count Radolinsky, who was madly in love with good Victoire Redern, but was badly

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treated by her and looked upon merely as a handy creature for running errands, played with her in a one-act piece which, so far as I remember, was entitled "Lâchez Hector!" He had to make her an ardent declaration of love, but this seemed so ridiculous to the audience that everyone roared with laughter, and Victoire said afterwards: "I can well imagine there was something to laugh at. No one can take poor Radolinsky seriously in his *rôle* as a lover, whether on the stage or off!" Even the kindest of women are cruel to those whom they do not love. It is said, by the way, that men are just the same—so the two sexes can cry quits.

In summer-time, when the evenings were fine (we did not get leave until the middle of August), we used to go to Lade's concerts, which were held in the large hall of the corner pavilion on the Brühl terrace. Our friends would wait for us in front of the confectioner's, just in the middle of the terrace. We drove to the great flight of steps on the Castle Square, and proceeded to the spot where we assembled every day. In those days starched petticoats were worn, and these made a loud rustling noise when one walked, so that, as I came up, Gersdorff would say to the other gentlemen, with moist eyes: "I hear the Metternich rustling." Then he would run up to me to inspect my "get-up." As I had

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innumerable hats and dresses in my trousseau, I made a point of putting on something new as often as possible. This was a source of huge delight to Gersdorff, and, as I afterwards learnt, to the wives and daughters of the bourgeoisie, who, in their worsted stockings, sat there in the concert-room, their “light lager” before them, and gazed at me in wonder. My appearance in these far too smart clothes was a great draw for the women-folk, so that Lade—though I did not know it at the time—looked upon me as his mascot, and whenever I came in broke off the piece that his band had been playing and struck up a march that was a favourite of mine. It was, in fact, a puff, and greatly delighted the frequenters of the place, who all looked out for this moment with eager expectancy. Gersdorff was in the seventh heaven: he revelled in the admiration that my dresses called forth.

My daughter, Sophie, was born in Dresden on the 17th of May. Grand-Duchess Sophie, the Emperor's mother, was staying at the time with her sister, Queen Mary, at the latter's residence, named the Weinberg, between Dresden and Pillnitz. She sent to enquire whether, in the event of the birth of a daughter, we should like to have her as godmother. We were, of course, delighted at this gracious offer. When Sophie was

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born and the day of christening was fixed, the Grand-Duchess deputed her son, Archduke Ludwig Victor, to act as her representative. The Grand-Duchess sent me a beautiful bracelet, with scarabs worked in emeralds, and with the inscription "Salve." As a result of the confinement I had been seriously ill, and I was sent to Königswart to recuperate. The following winter, when I had lost a good deal of my hair and was obliged to have the rest cut quite short, a little entertainment was got up for my birthday: my life-story was recited by Otto Könneritz, in the guise of a street-singer, explaining living pictures, and at the end a "transformation," in a very pretty casket, was secretly handed to me by Gersdorff. He was greatly distressed at the loss of my beautiful hair, and was afraid that I should not be able to wear a tiara at Court balls, so had been urged by our friends and by Richard to offer me these false tresses. The evening was one of unusual jollity. The Hohenthals were our hosts. How we laughed and gambolled!

Altogether, our life at the time was one long round of gaiety and merriment. There was only one thing that damped our good spirits—that was, when we had to go to soirées or large evening parties. On these occasions, our intimates would foregather at

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our house, and we proceeded in a body to the unfortunate hosts in question, greeted them, made a brief tour of the reception-rooms, and hurried home. Gersdorff's feelings were divided: he considered our behaviour in these cases not quite good form, but was glad to return to the pleasant, homely gathering at our house. It was most amusing to see him as he went away from such soirées, half crying, half laughing on the stairs, waving his handkerchief with a gesture peculiarly his own, then putting it to his eyes to dry the flood that streamed from them, and exclaiming: "Our little lot—we are really too absurd!" At one of these ineffably tedious parties—it was at Minister von Alschau's in the Bürgerwiese, at the corner of the Lüttichaustrasse—I remarked to Solms, who was about to enter a drawing-room in which a crowd of most boring people had assembled, "Don't go in there—it reeks of Excellencies." This indiscretion of mine is still brought up against me to this day.

With Freiherr von Beust, who was the Saxon Foreign Minister, and together with Freiherr von Dalwig, of Hesse-Darmstadt, played a leading political part in the Confederation, we were on very friendly terms, and I stood well with his wife, a von Jordan by birth, who figured in the gallery of beauties belonging to Ludwig I., King of Bavaria.



PRINCESS PAULINE METTERNICH, 1861

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Count Beust was a man of great intellectual gifts and very witty. He was a most unfaithful husband, and his wife was far from tolerant of his infidelities. Thus there were many quarrels between the two, and as Mathilde Beust was remarkably outspoken, these domestic affairs were often thrashed out in public. She usually had the last word, as Beust in such cases would silently let the storm sweep over him. Once, at a big official dinner that they were giving at the Foreign Office to the Diplomatic Corps—she was in a particularly bad temper that day—she asked her husband, who was sitting opposite her, and that, too, in a very loud voice, so that the whole table could hear : “ Why is the sweet called pudding *à la Nesselrode* ? ” “ Because it was invented by Count Nesselrode’s famous cook.” “ Ah ! ” she snapped, “ then our cook ought to invent a dish called pork cutlets *à la Beust* ! ”¹

As may well be imagined, a painful silence among the numerous guests followed this bitter taunt. Beust, in his cynical way, smiled and said : “ By Jove, that’s a good idea—I’ll suggest it to him ! ” and took no further notice of the matter, so that all breathed freely again, and the conversation

¹ It is impossible to render the full force of “ *côtelettes de cochon à la Beust* ,” *cochon* being a far stronger term of abuse than “ pig ” in English.—TRANSLATOR’S NOTE.

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was resumed as if nothing untoward had occurred. He said to me once : “ Mathilde is a perfect terror ! When the Queen of England asked her : ‘ Do you like London ? ’ she curtly answered : ‘ Not a bit ! ’ ” With such women, he held, one must adopt an attitude of stoicism.

The Beusts were very hospitable and entertained a great deal. Besides dinners, they gave soirees and dances, among others a gorgeous fancy-dress ball, with a procession representing the reception of a French Embassy at the Sultan’s Court in the days of Louis XV. In the ball-room there was erected the Sultan’s throne, beautifully draped with gold embroidery. Edmund Zichy, who had come to Vienna on a visit, acted as the Sultan, and was surrounded by his harem and by officials, guards, and slaves. Then the trumpets blared, the band started playing a ceremonial march, and the Embassy made its entry. Beust, as Ambassador, looked superb, dressed in velvet and silk, with powdered wig, and wearing the blue sash of the Order of the Holy Ghost.¹ Around him were a number of gentlemen in the costumes of the period, all clean-shaven. Then came musketeers, and finally a wonderful old sedan chair, in which I sat, representing the Ambassadress ; it was

¹ Instituted by Henri III. of France.—TRANSLATOR’S NOTE.

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carried by sumptuously-clad servants, and encircled by a crowd of lackeys, runners, and gentlemen-in-waiting, also by several ladies. Coming in front of the throne I stepped out, and the Ambassador addressed a most witty and clever speech to the Sultan. In introducing me he said: "If your Majesty is surrounded with beautiful ottomans, I can pride myself on bringing him a charming *causeuse*,"¹ and so it went on, one bit after another. The King and Queen and all the Princes and Princesses were present. Beust scored a wonderful success, and was congratulated on all sides. I wore a light blue satin costume, with silver embroidery, and tucked up with garlands of roses. It was an exact copy of an old portrait.

We did not often go to the theatre. It was dark and gloomy, and the performances were not always good. We preferred concerts. Whenever artists of note came to Dresden, we did not fail to go and hear them. I remember hearing old Frau Schröder-Devrient; the impression left on me was ineffaceable. An artist, in the true sense of the word, from top to toe! Although she must have been well over fifty, and her voice had lost a good deal in tone, she held her audience spell-bound by the power of her

¹ This means (a) a woman who talks well, (b) a sort of easy chair.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

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rendering, and anyone who heard her sing, or rather recite, Schumann's song, "Ich grolle nicht," will agree with me that no other singer's presentment can compare with hers. It was overpowering: in the words "Ich grolle nicht" ("I bear no grudge") lay the deepest hatred and the most boundless contempt, so that a cold shiver ran over one, and when the music stopped, one was almost too dazed to applaud. The Schröder-Devrient stood there, with flashing eyes, a picture of revenge, and all who heard and saw were deeply moved. At that moment, the old woman looked wonderful, a figure one could never forget as long as one lived.

Another glorious musical treat, which has also left a lasting impression on me, fell to our lot one evening at the house of Grimm, the Russian State Councillor, who had been tutor to Alexander II. and his brothers, and had settled in Dresden. . . . We met there Jenny Lind, who was good enough to perform for our benefit, although she assured me that she never sang at social gatherings, but did not care to refuse her old friend and his wife, when they wished to revive "memories of youth." She was no longer young, and far from beautiful. I felt some qualms as she went up to the piano and asked her husband, Herr Otto Goldschmidt, to accompany her, for I thought, judging by her appearance,

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that we should be grievously disappointed. A few chords were struck ; then we heard, as if from a remote distance, a very high trill, *pianissimo*, a trill in G and A sharp, which came ever nearer and nearer, till it filled the room with a sound like the exultant warbling of a nightingale ; one saw a transfigured woman, with shining blue eyes and a smile hovering on the lips that before were so primly shut, and with all one's soul one shared her joy and exhilaration. In that one exquisite voice lay happiness, sunshine, spring, joy of living, and love ! When the song was ended and all began to applaud, Jenny Lind raised her hand and said : "Please don't, I have always looked upon applause as the most distasteful feature of the singing profession, and in order to escape it I used to leave the theatre early ; so please spare me that, if you want me to sing again !" Jenny Lind was a Puritan, and as such a foe to all vanity. "God has given me a voice ; is that any merit of mine ?" she said to me in the course of the evening. "Do they applaud a beautiful woman when she comes into the room ? No. Very well then." Her face, as she spoke, became quite serious again, her lips looked as if they could never smile, and happiness and sunshine, love and joy of living had vanished, to make way for an unattractive air of prudery, which enveloped her whole

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person. When the company had promised not to applaud, she went up to the piano again and sang divinely Schumann's "Nussbaum" and "O Sonnenschein." At last, by the request of our hostess, she gave us Schubert's song, "Weiss nicht, warum ich singe," and it seemed to me as if I heard all the nightingales in the world warbling and trilling. At times it sounded so soft and tender; then came a loud answering note; then it went again *dolcissimo*, and by turns louder and softer. . . . Spring had come into the room in which we sat; the walls had become bushes, and the ceiling was a gigantic tree. From tree and bushes the nightingales sang to each other; then suddenly there sounded a mighty trill, echo answered it, and—all was over! . . . I could not help saying to Jenny Lind: "Well, they're not far wrong in calling you the Swedish nightingale," to which she quickly rejoined: "Yes, they *are* wrong; nightingales sing much better!" "Why were you never in Paris all through your artistic career?" asked Richard. "Because I wasn't good-looking enough, and always dressed very badly. In Paris they want not only to hear, but to see. Besides, in England and America I had made enough money to secure my future. Only vanity would have induced me to go to Paris—and vanity was never one of my weaknesses."

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Jenny Lind was happy in her marriage with Herr Goldschmidt, who, indeed, so far as looks were concerned, had no right to cast a stone at her, but who was on her level from a musical standpoint, in that he played the piano remarkably well and was a musician to his finger-tips. He accompanied her admirably.

Another great artist whom I heard and got to know in Vienna was Bogumil Dawison, who very soon afterwards came to the municipal theatre, where he proved a tremendous success.

In speaking above rather disparagingly of the theatre, I forgot Dawison. This was a great injustice, for he was one of our most eminent German actors. He was a Pole, and had mastered the German language in three years, mastered it to such a degree that he could speak it on the stage. The practised German ear could detect just a trace of an accent, but scarcely enough to jar upon one. As a matter of fact, I did the Dresden theatre a serious injustice, for now several names come back to me as I write, names of excellent actors and singers: Emil Devrient, Frau Bayer-Bürck and others; for instance, the famous tenor Tichatschek, who in singing used to repeat the first syllable of every word, a trick that annoyed me intensely. It was such an unpleasant mannerism that I wondered the whole audience did not boggle at it as

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much as I did ; but it seems that his really fine voice made up for the defect.

In May 1859, we left our beloved Dresden and proceeded to Vienna, where Richard had been summoned to act as A.D.C. on behalf of the Foreign Office, to his Majesty the Emperor, at headquarters in Verona. It was originally intended that when the campaign was over we should return to Dresden, but fate decreed otherwise, and we were transferred to Paris. But I never forgot Dresden and my Dresden friends, and as often as I had the opportunity—nor have I yet abandoned the practice—I visited the Saxon capital. Nearly every year I try, if possible, to spend a few days there in January. Lüttichau, who owned a charming little house in the Langenstrasse, opposite Prince George's palace, invited me to put up at his place, an offer which I gladly accepted. Those were always pleasant, cheery days, and I shall never forget them. . . . All our acquaintances assembled there, and we were such a merry party, so genuinely happy together, that Gersdorff with his streaming eyes was like a continuous fountain. . . . He used to weep just as others laughed ; the more tears he shed, the more joyful he felt.

Strange to say, young as I still was then, no one was surprised at my living in a bachelor's house, for everyone knew that Lüttichau and I had never flirted for a

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moment. Prince George alone was unable quite to accept the situation, and said to me : "Curious that you always stay at Lüttichau's when you come here!" to which I retorted : "Very likely, but it's still more curious that the most strict and formal people have never even hinted a doubt as to our friendly relations." He bit his lips and changed the conversation. Gersdorff, who did not like Prince George, was delighted at my answer.

Whenever I came to Dresden (I always made use of the time when our household was moving from Plass to Vienna) I found there a large number of invitations, first of all to one of the Court balls. King Albert and Queen Karola were exceedingly gracious towards me, and as soon as I arrived I always sought an audience, which was granted to me either in the Royal Castle or, even at that time of the year, at Strehlen, near Dresden, where their Majesties liked best of all to stay at their little villa. An audience at the Saxon Court was a much less ceremonious affair than at ours, for one was simply admitted into the Queen's drawing-room by the groom who happened to be on duty, and one saw no chamberlains or maids-of-honour anywhere in the place. The Queen shook hands heartily and offered any chair that came to hand, and the talk proceeded without any restraint. One did not feel in the least as if a queen were

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giving one an audience. Once, for instance, the Queen remarked that she did not like having to spend money to get dresses made for her, whereupon I ventured to suggest that her Majesty had no idea what a dress cost. "Don't you believe it!" cried the Queen. "I know very well what they cost, and as the dressmakers are so dear I buy the material and have all my workaday clothes made by my own women. They are just now engaged in making one. Would you care to have a look?" "Yes, indeed, your Majesty." She rose and took me through a boudoir crammed with knick-knacks; then into a little dressing-room, where the women were working. They all got up, and the Queen took from the work-table a grey woollen body, lined with calico or huckaback, asked for the skirt, and seemed quite proud of this dress made in *her* workshop. To be quite candid, it was hideous, and many a lady's-maid would have hesitated to wear it. I did not quite know what to say, and stammered out something like: "Yes, most remarkable!" which was scarcely suited to the occasion.

This little incident occurred at Strehlen. The King also often appeared at the audiences, coming in quite unexpectedly from an adjoining room: "I have just heard that you were with my wife, and I didn't want to miss you!" King Albert always used to say "my

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wife" when he spoke of the Queen, whereas her Majesty always said "the King" or "Albert." Both their Majesties took great pleasure in showing their visitors over the villa, and so, the first time we were at Strehlen, they conducted us over the ground floor and up a small staircase with handsome wood-carving to the first floor, showing us all their things, and seeming very pleased when we expressed our admiration of this or that. The villa has, in my opinion, two serious defects. First, it is not well situated; and secondly, the rooms are very small, and far too crowded with furniture and knick-knacks. The Queen had an enormous amount of bric-à-brac, and when it was all set out one would think one were in a shop. Never in my life have I seen such a quantity of ugly little vases and china figures as were in the Royal villa at Strehlen. Yes, ugly china in the then Saxon Court of all places! Who would imagine such a thing to be possible? Altogether, it is extraordinary how little many Royal personages understand about *objets d'art*, seeing that they spend their lives among them. . . . "Just fancy," said the King to me once at a Court ball, as we were sitting in the round, so-called porcelain room; "someone wanted to buy that great clock with its pendant, the big barometer in bronze, for £32,000. He must have been a fool.

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People are nowadays all more or less mad." I ventured to reply that £32,000 was a high price indeed, but by no means too high for two objects of such incomparable beauty. . . . Moreover, I said I had been told that these had been made to order by Caffieri for King Augustus the Strong, and that the mould had been destroyed, a fact which would greatly enhance their value. "Really!" said the King, "well, I'm not enthusiastic about them. I set very little store on such things, but I wouldn't sell them, for I never sell anything. I think it's impudent to make such offers. There was an Englishman who visited the castle one summer, and was very keen on getting hold of that china greyhound over there; he said he would give £200 for it." "That greyhound wouldn't tempt me," I said, "especially not in a room that contained the most beautiful china in the world, from the famous vases, for which King Augustus exchanged a regiment, to the chandeliers with the recumbent figures, which were mounted on bronze by von Goutières. Surely your Majesty will admit," I added, "that King Augustus did wisely in exchanging a regiment for the vases. Where is that regiment to-day? The glorious vases, on the other hand, we still see before us, in as good condition as ever." The King was taken aback at so unmilitary a remark; it seemed

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to bowl him over completely. At the Court balls, after the King had talked with the chief personages present, he liked to converse with ordinary mortals, and to unbend among the ladies. We chatted in a free-and-easy manner on anything that came into our heads. These talks with his Majesty soon became quite animated, and he certainly had a pleasing gift for conversation, without a trace of pedantry or heaviness. The King was a man of remarkably wide knowledge, but did not parade his learning. He used it merely to add a flavour to the conversation, just as one takes pepper and salt at meals. Altogether he reminded me very much of our late Emperor Francis Joseph I., but with the difference that he was less stiff in his intercourse with people, because he was used to talking on all manner of subjects, and without any noticeable reserve. Gersdorff always used to reproach him with not "making enough of himself," meaning that he was not kingly enough in manner. His simple, modest bearing annoyed Gersdorff, while I could not help thinking it very distinguished—in a different sense, indeed—although I knew quite well what Gersdorff meant. After all it is always difficult to hit the happy medium. At one of the smaller Court balls, when I had the honour of sitting by the Queen's side on the sofa of the dais during

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the cotillion, King Albert joined us (as a rule her Majesty had me "engaged for the cotillion," as she put it, when I was at the Court balls). While we were watching the dancers, and passing little remarks about them, we saw to our horror that one of the young ladies dancing was losing her petticoat. It was getting longer and longer, and the King was just going to send a chamberlain to draw the girl's attention to the matter, when to our joy we saw her flit past us once more with her dress perfectly in order. When the cotillion was over, the Queen got up and left the dais. Suddenly the King, who was standing near me, exclaimed : "There it is !" And under a chair near us we saw the fatal petticoat lying in a heap ! Perhaps this little story is not very interesting in itself, but it seemed worth recording as an instance of the free-and-easy way we used to talk with the Monarch. In spite of his position, he remained so human, chatted and laughed in such a simple fashion, that one felt no strain in his company, and enjoyed oneself exceedingly.

In spite of his simplicity and unpretending ways, however, the King had really no idea of the value of money in everyday life and of the thousand-and-one little difficulties of humble households. In this connection, I cannot refrain from adding one more anecdote

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to this already rather lengthy causerie. The episode amused us all immensely, Gersdorff in particular. One of the Queen's maids-of-honour had married an aide-de-camp of his Majesty, Herr von Minckwitz. It was a love-match, without much money on either side, and, as both bride and bridegroom were in high favour, the wedding was celebrated in the Chapel Royal. After the ceremony the happy pair were summoned to the Royal presence, and their Majesties made the customary wedding-present. As they were leaving, the King said to the bride: "The Queen and I are thinking of paying you a visit, once you are properly settled in your house at Oschatz" (this was the garrison town to which Herr von Minckwitz had been posted). "We'll let you have notice in good time beforehand." Deeply moved at so gracious a promise, both thanked their Majesties, and said to each other as they went off: "That's surely a promise that is not likely to be kept."

One day, however, about six months later, there came a note from the Lord Chamberlain, announcing the arrival of the King and Queen on a day in the near future, adding that their Majesties would come to dinner with a small retinue of ten persons in all. Feeling highly honoured, but at the same time overwhelmed, they looked at each

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other and wondered how they were going to entertain twelve guests when they only had plate for six. Herr von Minckwitz reassured his wife, saying that there was only one thing to be done, and that was to apply to their friends and acquaintances among their neighbours, and ask them to help them out with silver, table-linen, china, glass, lights, carpets, flowers, and chairs. No sooner said than done. They sent round requests, and the requisite articles were willingly supplied. Throughout the day came one van after another, and even servants were sent. The result was beyond all expectations. The little house was entirely transformed ; one would not have recognised it : the modest home had become a sort of temple of flowers. Herr and Frau von Minckwitz were amply rewarded for their trouble, but they were nearly worn out with their efforts.

The King and Queen appeared. The neighbours had, of course, sent carriages to the station, and everything went off swimmingly. The dinner, which had been prepared by a cook of Frau von Sahr's, was very much to their Majesties' taste, and every course was praised to the skies, as also were the excellent wines, which came from the mansion of a wealthy neighbour.

After dinner the guests stayed for an hour, and when the special train back to Dresden

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was announced and their Majesties were taking leave, the King turned to Frau von Minckwitz and said : "Many thanks for your kind reception, which has delighted my wife and myself. Everything is charming here. The dinner was excellent, but what pleased me more than anything was to see that you received us quite as ordinary friends, and did not put yourself out on our account ! "

CHAPTER IV

RICHARD WAGNER (1859-61)

As we were passing through Vienna on our way back to Paris from our Bohemian estates, we made the acquaintance of Richard Wagner. I had already been greatly impressed by "Tannhäuser," and I was most anxious to become acquainted with its composer. My wish was gratified through Liszt's good offices. Liszt happened to be in Vienna at the time, and one afternoon he came with Wagner to the Rennweg villa, then still surrounded by a large garden, the so-called "Metternich Grounds," now the Italian Embassy. He introduced his friend to us with the words, spoken in French: "Richard Wagner, the musician of the future, as they call him." Liszt, as is well known, generally used French in conversation. After the introduction he began to speak German, and the talk soon became most animated, for no one knew better than Liszt how to strike the right conversational note.

Wagner seemed slightly embarrassed; at any rate, he was extremely reserved. He did

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not show any of that self-confidence which was his right as a giant in the musical sphere, and from his exterior one would never have looked for the Titan in that small, puny, pallid man who sat there with a rather hesitating air. At last his embarrassment seemingly vanished, and he took part in the conversation. To my query whether he played any musical instrument, he replied : “ I can make myself understood on the piano ; but, as a matter of fact, I only play the orchestra ! ” “ Yes, that’s quite true,” interrupted Liszt, laughingly ; “ your piano-playing isn’t worth a brass farthing ! ” This remark did not seem to strike Wagner as at all amusing, and he retorted, somewhat nettled : “ Come, now ! I don’t play so badly as all that ! ”

When our two visitors took their leave, Liszt asked us whether he might not come one evening with his friend Wagner and let us hear extracts from the *Nibelungen* trilogy. Wagner would clear up some obscure points and incidentally sing certain passages. The offer was of course eagerly and thankfully accepted, and the evening was at once fixed. We invited some friends and acquaintances whom we knew to be music-lovers, and a few days after the above meeting we all sat round the piano in our large reception-room and eagerly awaited the treat in store for us.

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Liszt sat down at the piano. The magic tones as they rang out made one feel as if transported to some higher sphere. Then Wagner suddenly lifted up his voice, and like a croaking raven he screeched Siegmund's spring song from the "Walküre" with stupefying effect on us all. Then he asked Liszt to accompany him in "Wotan's Farewell." After roaring this out he went on to Brünhilde's song. And so on, through a bewildering variety of characters, keys, and registers. As a vocal effort, indeed, it was atrocious, but, so far as subtle, profound understanding was concerned, unapproachable. One lived through his operas with him, and, although his voice was utterly appalling from a singer's point of view, he succeeded in bringing out all that was best in his music. One may doubt whether anyone else will ever show a loftier conception of that music or give a nobler presentment.

He capered and bellowed and roared out like a lion the song of the giants in "Rheingold." The pale, insignificant little man whom we had seen a few days before sitting on the edge of his chair with an apologetic air seemed even to grow physically to superhuman stature; he actually became a giant. Since I saw Wagner perform the Entrance of the Giants, I have never been satisfied with any other actors of this scene. Wagner was

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a Titan—the others remain men of average build.

My admiration, my enthusiasm, my delight knew no bounds. Wagner seemed to be glad that I had entered into the spirit of the thing so thoroughly. I said to him : “ Such works are not meant only for Germany and German-speaking people ; they belong to the whole world. They ought to be performed in France, England, and Italy, in fact, everywhere.” “ You won’t live to see that,” he replied ; “ I shan’t live to see it either ! ” “ Come to Paris,” I broke in, “ and we’ll see whether we can’t break the ice there with ‘ Tannhäuser ’ ! ” He shook his head and declared that his music would never go down with the Parisians. When the party, still completely under the spell of this remarkable performance, broke up, Wagner took me aside and asked me if it would be convenient for me if he called for me on the following morning and took me to see the first rehearsal, under his direction, of the Prelude to “ Tristan ” at the Court Opera House. Of course I accepted the offer, and next morning at ten o’clock I was sitting in box No. 2, waiting for the rehearsal to begin.

Wagner came in, strode up to the conductor’s place, and was greeted with loud applause by the whole orchestra. Without much bowing or any demonstrations of thanks,

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he gave the sign to begin. Our admirable singers read their parts, and had I not known that not one of them had had even a glimpse of the notes previously, I should have believed that there had been some rehearsals. In the middle of the glorious Prelude, Wagner suddenly stopped. He stepped down into the orchestra, and went from one music-stand to another, pencil in hand, in order to make alterations. Profound silence reigned. This may have lasted twenty minutes; then he went back to his place, raised his *bâton* and started the Prelude all over again. When he came to the place where he had made corrections, all pricked up their ears in eager expectancy of what was to come; the music did indeed sound more powerful and impressive than before, although it had already been exceedingly beautiful. We all sat mute and deeply stirred by the might of genius which, with a few strokes of the pencil, had achieved such incredible things. Wagner did indeed "play the orchestra." And how he played it!

I have never been prone to "gush," nor did I ever go out of my way to burn incense at Wagner's shrine. But as I was going away I said to him, as I hastened to congratulate him: "Come to Paris, and you'll see!" I thanked him whole-heartedly for granting me the inestimable privilege of hearing this rehearsal.

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He shook hands and said gravely : “ Well, au revoir ! ” “ In Paris ? ” I queried. “ In Paris ! ” was his laconic reply. Two days later we went back to France, and at the same time Wagner and Liszt left Vienna. It was about the middle of October.

On the 20th of November we went to Compiègne for the Emperor’s autumn holiday there. I told people there that I had made the acquaintance of Richard Wagner and was still under the spell of his mighty genius. I got in reply only sneers, and the solemn assurance that the horrible “ music of the future ” would never gain a foothold in France. France, it was said, loved only melody—pure melody ! To the “ musician of the future,” so absurdly and incomprehensibly admired and lauded to the skies in Germany, harmony was an unknown quantity. He could only make a noise with kettledrums and trumpets ; every chord rang false ; in a word, the man was a rank swindler, and his “ greatness ” was founded on artful advertisement !

“ It’s as false,” added one hothead, “ as his chords and his transitions that violate all the rules of harmony ! ”

To argue with those who held such ridiculous opinions was out of the question, but I vowed vengeance upon them, and I have been avenged beyond all expectation ; for, if I may include myself among the enthusi-

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astic devotees of Wagnerian music, I find that my enthusiasm is exceeded by most French people. But when I had been told so often that Wagner's music would never, never be accepted in France—particularly in Paris—I did not dare to take steps to get "*Tannhäuser*" performed, and for the time being I let the matter drop.

I could not, however, entirely abandon the idea, and one day, quite unexpectedly, I had the opportunity of carrying it out. The occasion was provided by a ball at the Tuileries. The Emperor Napoleon III. had a long conversation with me on the subject, and when the performances at the Opera came up for discussion, I could not refrain from frankly declaring to him that it was a pity the repertory was so limited—a constant round of "*William Tell*," "*The Huguenots*," and "*La Favorita*." "How is it," I asked, "that they cannot produce successful new works here as they do in the great Opera-Houses of Austria and Germany?" Then I thought to myself: "Now or never is the time to come out with Wagner and '*Tannhäuser*.'" So I added: "By the way, I have a great favour to ask of your Majesty—a request to make." "What!" replied the Emperor, astonished, but smiling, "a favour in connection with the Opera-House?" "Yes; it is about an opera I am most anxious to see performed here."

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“And whose is this wonderful opera?” queried the Emperor.

“It is by Richard Wagner, one of the greatest composers of the day. It is called ‘Tannhäuser,’ and is being played in Vienna. I won’t say that it appeals to everyone, but all the musical experts consider it a masterpiece.”

“‘Tannhäuser,’ Richard Wagner!” said the Emperor, musingly, stroking his moustache in his habitual manner, “I have never heard of the opera or the composer. And you think it is really good?” I said I did, and the Emperor turned to his Lord Chamberlain, Bacciochi, who had charge of the Imperial theatres, and said to him in his off-hand way: “Oh, Bacciochi, Princess Metternich is interested in an opera called ‘Tannhäuser,’ by one Richard Wagner, and wants to see it performed here in Paris—will you arrange to have it done?” Bacciochi bowed and replied: “As your Majesty commands. But it will take some time; a big opera can’t be staged in a day or so.” And that was how “Tannhäuser” found its way to Paris. I was greatly delighted and not a little astonished at the marvellous ease with which my request was to be fulfilled. I had only had to say the word, and yet I had hesitated long before saying it! In this natural way, without any plotting and planning, Wagner saw his opera introduced to the

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Parisians. A simpler method of introduction could hardly be imagined.

The performance of “Tannhäuser” was fixed for the following year, and notice of this was given to Wagner. Effusive gratitude was never in his line, and he accepted the news without a word of thanks. In late autumn the rehearsals began. The opera was to be produced in March. As is well known, there is scarcely a theatre in the world where a piece, before it sees the light of day, is rehearsed and pulled about so much as in the Paris Opera-House. During the winter of 1863 Wagner arrived to supervise the rehearsals. If he had been able to say of himself that he only “played the orchestra,” he might have added that he did not play with the musicians in the orchestra. He worried them to death. He was simply insufferable; and if the command to perform “Tannhäuser” had not been issued directly by the Emperor, the whole thing might well have fallen through. Musicians, singers, members of the chorus, scene-shifters, even those in charge of the lighting, I believe, were nearly driven mad, and often refused to comply with the great man’s whims and crotchets.

Niemann was summoned from Germany to take the part of Tannhäuser, in accordance with Wagner’s earnest desire. The day of the performance drew near, and Wagner

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became more and more unendurable. Liszt, who had come to Paris, was unable to soothe his friend. One morning Wagner and Liszt called upon us. When we touched upon the forthcoming performance, Wagner, in his usual fashion, got excited, rushed to the piano, and hastily wrenched it open, merely to show us how the Pilgrims' Chorus should be played. He hacked it about abominably. At last Liszt could stand it no longer ; he jumped up from his chair, unceremoniously thrust Wagner aside, sat down at the piano, and set to work with a will. The glorious Pilgrims' Chorus rang out so vividly that we could see before us the troop of heavily-laden pilgrims, proudly marching along. Liszt had the gift of lending such dramatic force to his playing as I have never known in the case of any other player, even Rubinstein. When Liszt rose from the piano, he said to Wagner : " After all, I play better than you do !" whereupon Wagner, turning to us, declared in an injured tone that Liszt had always tried to belittle his musical abilities. We could not help smiling at this foolish, small-minded attitude. It was not his musical endowments that Liszt had found fault with, but only his poor technique as a pianist. Wagner's vanity, however, was so unbounded that he could not endure the slightest criticism, no matter whether it was levelled at his compositions, his taste, his

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personal appearance, or anything else about him.

I was bold enough to say to him quite frankly—and I am not ashamed to own to the fact—that listening to Mime was no pleasure to me, that Fricka's curtain lecture was far too long-winded, that the Venusberg scene tended to drag; in fact that, in my opinion, he always made his scenes too long; and so on. Whether in his heart of hearts he was angry with me, or whether he appreciated my outspokenness, I cannot tell. I think, though, that he regarded me as excessively stupid—a later episode went far to confirm me in this view. If only his expert friends and acquaintances could have brought themselves at times to offer him genuine criticism, instead of the false coin of flattery, Wagner would have made many alterations in his work; above all, he would have omitted a good deal, to the great advantage of the whole. As it was, the adulation heaped upon him beyond all measure, strengthened to a ludicrous degree his conviction that he was godlike and infallible.

The day of the performance drew near, and in most quarters was awaited with considerable misgivings. Everyone said that protests would be raised against the horrible “music of the future,” and that stormy scenes would take place in the Opera-House. At all the

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clubs the men were up in arms because Wagner would not have a ballet, except for a few dancing poses in the Venusberg scene. The subscribers to the club boxes at the Opera are accustomed to see a ballet introduced at half-past nine sharp in every opera (at any rate, such was the practice in those days). How, indeed, a ballet could be introduced in the middle of "Tannhäuser" was more than any of us could fathom, and Wagner declared that he would not meet the wishes of those subscribers, because he could not. In this he was perfectly right, but his obstinacy was to cost him dear. On the evening of the 13th of March, 1861, I drove with my husband to the Opera-House, which was then situated in the Rue Lepelletier. In front of the entrance there was a barricade of carriages, as was always the case on important first nights. With countless acquaintances we made for the great staircase. The crowd was enormous, and I was pelted with a thousand questions, such as, "Well! Is your Wagner going to be a success?" "They say he's unbearable," retorted another. "Princess," said someone else, "prepare to hear your protégé hissed." "Why do you try to force this fellow down our throats? He declares war upon all melody," and so forth.

On my entering the great box between the pillars—*loge entre les colonnes*—opposite

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the stage, all eyes in the house were turned towards me, and everyone took stock of me, to see whether I was excited or not. I put a bold front on the matter, and sat down, outwardly calm, but inwardly I was in a whirl. I had a presentiment that things would go wrong, for before a single note was played people began trying to whistle on keys. In short, an atmosphere of violent hostility prevailed, and from the start there seemed to be a determination to give "*Tannhäuser*" the *coup de grâce*. This was painfully obvious. Then there appeared the most tedious of all conductors—the humdrum and lethargic Haindl. A shrill hiss ran through the house. Haindl, who belonged to the category of conductors who merely beat time, raised his long fiddle-bow (for in France the *bâton* is never used and seems to be unknown). Then began the magnificent overture. When it was finished and had met with a fair measure of applause a gentleman in the box next to me said aloud : "It's not so bad as I expected." Later he might have been one of the most enthusiastic visitors to Bayreuth. After this, things went smoothly on the whole. The Venusberg was endured in rather sulky silence, but when in the first act the little shepherd's song was heard there was loud laughter, and cries came from the gallery, such as : "When you've quite finished with your reed-pipe tune, you

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idiot!" and the most hideous cat-calls added to the uproar. So they rang the changes on hissing, laughing, bawling, and contemptuous silence, until the Pilgrims' Chorus. Even Elizabeth's beautiful entrance: "Thee, dear hall, I greet once more!" met with no favourable response from the audience. Only when the march was played was there warm, nay, enthusiastic applause, and at its conclusion a large part of the audience turned to the box in which I was sitting and gave me an ovation with true Gallic verve, as if *I* had composed the Pilgrims' Chorus!

After this, however, all the glory was over, and not a hand was raised except to put a key or a whistle to the mouth! It was a fiasco of the first water. I could not possibly say whether Niemann was good or bad—I think he was bad; whether Marie Sasse sang or someone in the wings sang for her; in a word, I had lost all faculty for criticism, so great were my dismay and vexation at the failure. The famous dramatic critic, Jules Janin, wrote next day a charming article under the title "The Fan." In this article, which created much stir, he expressed his regret at my disappointment, and, in order to make the affair interesting, recounted how, bathed in tears, I had broken my beautiful and costly fan. The article began: "It is broken, the beautiful fan." But the fan was not broken—

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there is no truth in the pretty story. I held out till the end of the performance, though I suffered real agonies through it all. As we were driving home, I said to my husband : "Wagner was right ; his music won't go down with the Parisians !"

A few more attempts were made to play "*Tannhäuser*," but these performances met with the same opposition, and there was no end to the hissing and howling. In the club boxes the spectators behaved like men possessed, and before the curtain went up the hubbub always started in the house. Wagner therefore decided to withdraw his opera, and the directors gladly acquiesced in his decision. Thus, after a brief but painful illness "*Tannhäuser*" gave up the ghost. Wagner, however, was now in an awkward predicament. He had counted upon the royalties to defray the expenses of his stay in Paris, and it turned out that he was short of funds. Happy-go-lucky, as artists usually are, he had lived far beyond his means, so that debts of all kinds had sprung up like mushrooms here, there, and everywhere. The poor man was at his wits' end, and did not know where to turn. A friend told us in confidence of the distressing situation, and we decided to make a collection among his acquaintances and not too numerous admirers. My husband headed the subscription-list with 5,000 francs, and we succeeded

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in raising 25,000 francs within twenty-four hours. The debts were paid ; Wagner still had a few thousand francs left for his travelling expenses, and left Paris in a very downcast frame of mind.

After this I saw him two or three times again in Vienna. In an essay, the title of which I cannot recollect, he gave to the world his impressions of his unfortunate sojourn in Paris. In this essay, by the way, he mentions his relations with us, expressing himself in some such terms as the following : " In Paris I often visited the house of the Austrian Ambassador, Prince Metternich. The Prince, who went in for music in his leisure hours, once showed me one of his compositions, which lay spread out on the piano, and pestered me to do him the favour of looking through it. The Princess, a cheerful young lady, said to me once *en passant* that she had a great predilection for Bach's fugues. What she meant by that, I really don't know ! "

So far as my husband's asking favours was concerned, the facts of the matter are slightly different. One evening Wagner happened to be near the piano, and saw lying on it some manuscript music. " Who composes here ? " he asked, and took up one of the books in order to skim through the pages. My husband, who, although a highly-gifted amateur, was anything but vain, went over to Wagner and

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said: "Please don't look at that wretched stuff. I'm a mere dabbler, and write dance-music for my own amusement." Wagner, however, would not give up the sheets: he sat down at the piano, read them through cursorily, and said: "You haven't made any mistakes, but I suggest leaving out these chords at the end; it would sound more original." Then he proceeded to play the music. My husband was of course very grateful to the Master, and said to him: "That modest little waltz has been highly honoured!" So much for the "pestering for favours!"

As for the foolish remark of the cheerful young lady, which indeed sounds odd in the way that Wagner introduces it, the reference is to a discussion that arose on Bach's fugues. After Liszt had given a wonderful rendering of some of these, I ventured to remark that some people found the fugues terribly dry and tedious, but that I had been particularly fond of them even in my early youth—a thing I really could not explain, as I had not the faintest notion of counterpoint.

Such, then, were the only recollections of us that had remained in Wagner's memory—the one of my husband's lack of modesty, the other of my stupidity!

In his letters to me, I must admit, Wagner showed us far more indulgence. For the

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endless musical enjoyment that he has afforded, and still affords me, I shall always be thankful to him. Thankful in particular because my name is always coupled with that of "Tannhäuser," at any rate in Paris. That is Wagner's expression of thanks, his legacy to me. Today the works of the immortal composer are popular in Paris. The French, I have been told, are the most numerous among the pilgrims to Bayreuth, and when a Wagner opera is put on in the Académie National de Musique, there is always a full house. *Tempora mutantur.*

CHAPTER V

FRANZ LISZT

I ALWAYS had a great liking for Franz Liszt, not only as an artist, but as a man. Personally he was more sympathetic to me than Wagner. Liszt was indeed vain—what great artist is not?—but he was so infinitely kind-hearted, so magnanimous, so loyal in his friendships, that one readily overlooked his little vanities, when one came into closer contact with him and got to know him thoroughly. I like to recall his visits to Paris, where he was a frequent caller at our house. During one of these visits it so happened that Gounod had invited us to an evening party, and when he heard that Liszt was in Paris he begged us to ask the latter in his name to attend the soirée. Strange to say, Liszt and Gounod did not know each other, so that my husband and I were the means of bringing them together. Liszt accepted the invitation. On our arrival we were greeted most effusively, Liszt in particular because he was Liszt, and we because we had persuaded him to accept Gounod's

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invitation. He already wore the priestly cassock, and in point of fact was no longer greatly inclined to enter artistic circles. We had assured him that he could not refuse without offending Gounod, and his kindness of heart prevailed over his scruples. He came, saw, and conquered.

When the formalities of introduction were over, Gounod sat down at the piano and sang as he alone knew how to sing: in a weak and rather muffled voice, it is true, I might almost say in a voice that would have sounded ugly to those who can only admire bell-like tones, but with such an incredible charm of delivery that all who heard him were in raptures. He sang various extracts from his own "Faust," and took the parts of soprano, tenor, and baritone by turn with such consummate mastery, that even Liszt could not get over his astonishment. When Gounod at last stopped, Liszt told him that he would gladly play something from "Faust," but must ask for a copy of the music, as he did not know the opera well enough to play from memory. Gounod declared that he only had the orchestral score, whereupon Liszt laughingly replied that it did not matter, and that, with the composer to help him out, he would be quite content with that. The score was placed on the music-rest, and he opened with Gretchen's first meeting with Faust; then

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went on to the waltzes, in which, as in the rest, he introduced marvellous improvisations ; and so on to the end. All present were fascinated and delighted. "That's enough," he suddenly said. "In honour of the Princess I'm going to play her favourite piece—Rossini's 'Caritá.'" He played it exquisitely—as a matter of fact, I have never heard it played by anyone but Liszt.

After the Gounod evening there were some musical evenings at the Embassy, at which Liszt was the centre of attraction. Incredible though it may sound, I cannot resist mentioning the fact that Liszt once proposed to me that he and I should play a waltz of Strauss as a duet ! The idea of refusing would never have entered my head, for on such an occasion, when the gathering was quite an intimate one, it would have been simply foolish to do so. "With the greatest pleasure," I replied, and I fearlessly dashed into the fray with the waltz "Moths." I had never played so well in my life, for of course one could only hear Liszt. My strumming was like the buzz of a gnat beside the roar of a lion. At one of these cheery musical evenings our friend Saint-Saens appeared. Liszt suggested that they should play together on two pianos, an offer that was enthusiastically accepted. It was a memorable experience to hear such a pair. "There's no doubt about it, we two play remarkably well

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together," said Liszt, and laughed heartily over this self-praise. Then he turned to Saint-Saens, and exclaimed: "It is possible to be as much of a musician as Saint-Saens; it is impossible to be more of one!"

The Emperor Napoleon and the Empress Eugénie had heard of the Liszt evenings at our house, and wanted to have the great pianist as their guest. We were ordered to take him to the Tuilleries. The invitation went out to him and to us in the form of a little dinner-party. After dinner the Emperor asked Liszt to play to him. Once more he gave a rendering of my favourite "*Caritá*"; then he played a charming waltz of Schubert's, which he called "*Backhändel*," but which, I believe, is not known under that title. He wound up with the *Preghiera* from Rossini's "*Moïse*." At the end came a series of powerful tremolos, and when it was over, the Emperor said to him: "How well you imitate thunder!" This praise acted like an unexpected douche of ice-cold water. The chilling effect, however, was pleasantly counter-acted next day, when the Emperor conferred upon the artist, through my husband, the Legion of Honour. Finally Count Walewski, the Minister of Fine Arts at the time, approached us with the request that we should persuade Liszt to let us take him to one of his receptions. This was not such an easy

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matter, and it needed all the arts of cajolery to induce the great man to accept the offer.

Liszt was, of course, at once assailed with entreaties to play, and I may proudly confess that, if I had not pressed him so hard, not a single note would have been heard from him that evening. He was not merely out of humour, but downright angry, and said to me: "You're putting the bear through his paces!" Fortunately Mlle. Viardot-Garcia, the famous singer and incomparable artist—for grandeur and style in singing, there was no one but Lilli Lehmann who reminded me of her—was present, and in her gracious way she came to my rescue, by asking Liszt to accompany her for the "Erlkönig." And so it was that I gained my point and heard the "Erlkönig" sung by the Viardot with accompaniment by Liszt. It would be scarcely possible to hear a finer, a more impressive, combination.

Liszt left Paris, and we did not meet him again until years later in Venice, and that, too, in 1881. I was alone one evening, deep in a book. The door opened and "Herr Liszt" was announced. He came from Weimar, where he had organised a musical and poetic memorial celebration on behalf of the unforgettable Marie Mouchanow (*née* Nesselrode and a niece of the celebrated Chancellor's). In a Grand-ducal summer-house, which he had



MARIE KALERGIS

Franz Liszt

had decorated with flowers and plants, and in the middle of which he had had a bust of the dear departed set up, he performed, for the benefit of her friends and admirers, the pieces which she had been wont to play with such rare skill, and ended with an “Elegy” dedicated to her as a farewell greeting. After speaking to me of Marie Kalergis, he added : “I know that you loved her. You ought to have taken place in our memorial celebration.” He went up to the piano, opened it, and on that evening, which I spent alone with him, he played more beautifully than I had ever heard him play before. He must have sat there for two hours, pouring forth the music of the spheres. In some strange way he seemed to have assimilated all that was characteristic in the playing of our dearly beloved friend, for from time to time he would say, half to himself : “That’s how she used to play Chopin ; that’s how she used to render that phrase.”

When he took his leave, tears stood in his eyes, and he said : “Marie Mouchanow in passing away has left a void that no one and nothing can ever fill for me. I was deeply attached to her. Life has lost much of its savour for me now that she has gone.” Then he held out both hands to me, said good-bye, and added : “I shan’t play any more—you have heard me for the last time.” And, indeed, I never heard him play again.

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From Paris he once sent me a beautifully bound copy of the arrangement of "Lohen-
grin" for the pianoforte. On the front page are inscribed the following words, written by his own hand: "Copy belonging to Madame la Princesse de Metternich, as does her very humble servant, F. Liszt." Naturally I am not a little proud of this twofold possession.

CHAPTER VI

MAÎTRE LACHAUD¹

(PARIS, 1862)

ONE evening I was standing in the middle of the great drawing-room at the Foreign Office and conversing with various people, when the Foreign Minister, M. Rouher, came up to us to take part in the conversation. Rouher fairly scintillated with wit ; it was a perennial joy to chat with him and to listen to his sallies. He could talk upon any subject ; he seemed to be interested in everything ; and under his guidance every conversation became fascinating. We began an animated talk, and all sat down in a corner of the drawing-room. The topic of wit came up for discussion. Of course I could not resist telling Rouher, in all sincerity, that in my opinion he was one of the most witty and amusing men I had ever met, to which he laughingly rejoined : “ If you have such a good opinion of me, what will you say of Lachaud ? ” “ I don’t know him, ” I answered. (Lachaud was the most

¹ In France, the title *Maître* is applied to all barristers.—TRANSLATOR’S NOTE.

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famous counsel of the days of the Second Empire.) Rouher jumped up and said : "Then I must introduce him to you. He is here, and in order to show you how ready-witted he is, I will do my best to put him out of countenance, though I assure you it's next to impossible." He went off, and a few moments later reappeared with a stout gentleman, whose ruddy complexion and staring eyes made him no very attractive figure. He introduced me to him with the words : "Allow me, Princess, to present to you the wittiest man in Paris." Lachaud, instead of getting embarrassed, as anyone else would have done in his place, started off at once like a rocket when the signal is given to begin a firework display. The rockets burst into dazzling sparks of wit and brilliant ideas. We were speechless. How did he come to think of all these things ? How pleasantly he rattled on ; what stories he told ! Bubbling over, yet never wearying his listeners, stimulating, provocative of argument, so that he not only talked, but actually put clever and appropriate answers into one's mouth. Never since then have I experienced anything like it.

Later I often met Lachaud, once while staying with the French Imperial Family at Compiègne. I remember an incident which caused universal merriment and which speaks volumes for the shrewdness and cunning of

Maître Lachaud

the famous barrister. The Empress Eugénie, in the evening, after dinner, liked to sit in a drawing-room, gather round her a little group of bright talkers, chiefly men drawn from the most varied social strata, and chat with them without constraint on all manner of subjects. One evening I wanted to go through the drawing-room in which her Majesty usually sat when Lachaud appeared in the opposite doorway. We were both about to withdraw, when the Empress called us to stay and sit down beside her. I remember only one gentleman among three or four who were there. This was the well-known Imperial *procureur* (Public Prosecutor), Oscar de Vallée — a very poetical name for so prosaic a person. The Empress turned the conversation on to the law-courts, and encouraged Lachaud to speak of his experiences at the bar. She told him how often she had admired his wonderful speeches, how she envied his powers as an orator, how splendid it must feel to convert the judge and jury to express sympathy with the prisoner, and so forth. “Ah, your Majesty,” said Lachaud, “I play upon the jury as another man plays upon the violin.” “And what about the judges?” interrupted Oscar de Vallée. “I move them to tears,” was Lachaud’s reply. The Public Prosecutor grew quite heated at this and declared that Lachaud’s finest oratorical efforts had never

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moved him. "I beg your pardon," objected Lachaud; "I did once see you with tears in your eyes," and he mentioned a speech of his in defence of some criminal whose name I forget. "It wasn't your magnificent speech that affected me, Maître Lachaud," exclaimed Oscar de Vallée, "but the unspeakable sorrow and suffering of his poor old mother, who had written a letter to you, one of the most touching I have ever read. Those lines, one may say, breathed the inexhaustible fullness of mother-love." Then Lachaud got up from his chair. "And yet it was I, and I alone, who moved you to tears, for I wrote the letter myself. The old woman had long been dead. I resurrected her for the purpose!"

On another occasion—it was at the time of the sensational Troppmann murder case—we were again at an evening reception at the Foreign Office. Lachaud, who was Troppmann's counsel, clung firmly to his belief that Troppmann had an accomplice, and that the verdict must somehow be delayed until this person could be discovered. He actually managed to have the trial unduly prolonged. My husband, who was greatly interested in the case, came across Lachaud in one of the reception-rooms, accosted him, and took him over to a window-seat, where they entered upon a long conversation undisturbed. When they joined the guests again, everyone rushed

Maître Lachaud

up to Richard with the question : “ Well, what did Lachaud tell you ? Has he hopes of finding the accomplice ? Are they on his trail ? ” and so on. Richard answered that the murderer refused to name his associate, that he would rather mount the scaffold than commit such an act of treachery ; but that Lachaud hoped to induce Troppmann to reveal the truth. A few days later the trial ended, and the verdict was given. Troppman was found guilty without extenuating circumstances. After all, he had been the sole culprit. When my husband, soon afterwards, met Lachaud, he could not help asking him with a smile : “ Well, what did you do with the famous accomplice ? ” “ When I had that long talk with you about Troppmann,” Lachaud replied, “ I knew that he had no accomplice, but I also knew that all the quidnuncs would besiege you, in order to find out what I had told you. Now if they hear that Lachaud has told Prince Metternich that he is still convinced of the existence of an accomplice, this might in some way or other come to the ears of the jury and influence them in favour of the accused.” He added : “ They’re such a stupid lot ! ”

CHAPTER VII

COUNT TAAFFE

(An amusing story of the 'forties. Dedicated to my friend, Count Hans Wilczek.)

I MAY claim to be one of the few people left to-day who—even if the recollection is a very youthful one—knew the old Vienna of the eighteen-forties, with its bastions, its city moat, and its glacis, and who felt perfectly at home among all these fortifications, and drove in and out of the Kärntnertor [Carinthian Gate], the Stubentor, and the Rotenturmtoer every day, and who lived on the bastions. The front of my parents' house was on the so-called hydraulic bastion, and had a view of the water-glacis, across the charming gardens of Archduke Charles, situated opposite the city wall, and still farther to the Haymarket Barracks and the Schwarzenberg Palace. The back of it lay on the Seilerstätte, opposite the entrance to the Annagasse. I don't know why I relate all this, for it has nothing to do with the story of Count Taaffe, but when I look back upon my childhood's days, when dear old Vienna is

Count Taaffe

in question, I naturally feel inclined, like all old people, to linger on the past, and to lose no opportunity of acting up to that admirable saw: "Out of the full heart the mouth speaketh." The Taaffe story is an amusing episode of the days of old Vienna towards the end of the eighteen-forties, an episode which, so I was told, set the whole city in a ferment and whose upshot was received with universal and well-deserved laughter. It was recounted to me later by my mother in her witty and graphic way, and I fancy I can still hear her telling the story. So far as I remember, this tragi-comic incident must have occurred in the year 1846.

Count Taaffe, President of the Supreme Court of Justice, was not merely a high-placed official personage, but a gentleman of exalted position in Court society. His wife, *née* Princess Brezenheim, was worthy of him in every way, and the pair justly enjoyed the honour and esteem that were their due. They were, in fact, respected in the full sense of the word. Count Taaffe was a man of stiff and formal, but profound, courtesy. Any sort of familiarity in intercourse with him seemed out of the question. I recollect seeing him nearly every day, between two and three o'clock, on the bastion. He wore a wide-rimmed, so-called Bolivar hat, a long broadcloth overcoat, with coat and trousers to match, and a taffeta

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cravat, without white edging, wound twice round his neck. As he stalked past, he seemed to embody the law in all its inexorable sternness. Yet ordinary mortals dared to play a joke upon him.

One day, when he was returning from his constitutional, he saw standing in front of his house, which was in the Löwenstrasse, several vans, from which furniture, lamps, carpets, and festoons (then made of paper, as the elaborate floral decorations were then entirely unknown) were being unloaded. As he passed through the gateway he asked the porter what a number of workmen, with their paraphernalia, were doing at his house ? "Please, your lordship," was the answer, "they have been ordered to decorate the footpath and the drawing-rooms for to-morrow's soirée." "What !" cried the Count, greatly annoyed, "I know nothing of any soirée ; send them all to the devil. It must be a mistake. I suppose someone has given them a wrong address." After much wrangling, workmen and vans were sent about their business.

Next day, early in the morning, when the Count's valet entered his master's room, he respectfully informed him that there was a violent altercation going on in front of the house and in the courtyard, because of the appearance of twelve vans with baths from various bathing-establishments, the drivers all

Count Taaffe

declaring that they had been ordered to take them to his Excellency's. "Send them all away," said the Count to his man. "I haven't ordered anything of the kind. What's this newfangled style—tradesmen pushing their way into houses and saying that orders have been given them?"

Twenty-four hours elapsed, and then, next morning, the same luckless valet appeared in fear and trembling before his master and respectfully informed him that two dozen chiropodists were assembled in the ante-chamber. They were making a terrific din, each one maintaining that he had the right to be admitted first, and flourishing the letter in which the hour of the appointment was stated, together with a reminder to be punctual. The horrified servant added: "Beg pardon, your Excellency; they're already beginning to come to blows, and have threatened to give me a hiding!" Naturally, Count Taaffe was furious, and declared that he would take drastic steps to put an end to these scandalous proceedings. Strict orders were issued to the porter that, on pain of dismissal, he was not to let in anyone whose appointment had not been notified by his master on the previous day.

So the fourth day passed without incident. No one had ventured to approach the palace in the Löwenstrasse, and the usual solemn calm

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prevailed. Screened by the high bastion wall, the house seemed like a bulwark against any dangerous assault ; for they were beginning to be prepared for the worst. On the fifth day —a Sunday—profound calm reigned again, and the inmates began to breathe freely. At five o'clock in the afternoon the customary little family dinner was to take place, in its entirely informal style. Just as the family were about to sit down to dinner, two rings at the bell were heard from the porter's lodge. All looked at each other, and the question was asked : "Who can that be? A lady, too ; and we're all here ; there's no one missing."

Then the much-enduring footman, his knees knocking together, burst into the room, flung open the folding doors, and called out the names of Prince and Princess Schwarzenberg. A moment later there was another ring at the bell, then another, guests appeared, name after name was announced : Prince and Princess Lobkowitz, Prince and Princess Auersperg, Prince and Princess Windisch-Graetz, and so it went on endlessly, Counts and Excellencies, and last of all came the names of Prince and Princess Liechtenstein, the aristocratic beauty and splendour of the Princess, glittering with diamonds, adding the crowning touch to the universal amazement and confusion.

The master and mistress of the house, the



COUNT LOUIS TAAFFE

Count Taaffe

other members of the family, and the uninvited guests were completely nonplussed. All looked at each other without uttering a word. The visitors, of course, soon realised that some inexplicable mistake had been made, and offered their hearty apologies, but Count Taaffe and his wife already suspected, in the midst of all their shame, indignation, and embarrassment, that another rascally trick had been played. The question again presented itself, how could all these people have been led astray? The explanation was that printed invitation cards for a dinner had been sent out. When some sixty Society people had received these, it was known that a big dinner was to be given at Count Taaffe's, and all had appeared in full evening dress. The master and mistress of the house did their best to explain the disgraceful business, and the poor mystified guests had to withdraw, dinnerless. It was no easy matter, what with the ordering of carriages and all the rest of it. Prince Liechtenstein, well known as an attentive husband, was terribly distressed at the idea that his wife would get nothing to eat—he was sure they would have nothing at home; and in those days there was no *Hôtel Sacher*, or Bristol.

When all had left, Count Taaffe burst into a tremendous rage, and gave orders that the Chief of Police, Count Sedlnitzky, was to be

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requested to come and see him at once, as he had a most important communication to make. The official hurried along, and was highly indignant when he heard the tale of all these scandalous proceedings and of the mischief that had been plotted against the President of the Supreme Court of Justice. He promised without delay to take all steps to see that no further trouble of the kind should arise. "It would be unfortunate indeed," he declared, "if we could not at once put a stop to such unseemly behaviour and bring these misdemeanours home to the culprits: all shall be done to spare your Excellency further annoyance."

Nevertheless, the Taaffe household looked forward with some misgivings to the following day: but calm was restored when they saw that the police had the matter well in hand, and that the house was carefully watched. At two o'clock in the afternoon, Count Taaffe, as usual, went for his daily walk. The Countess called out to her husband: "Well, to-day, at last, we are in peace—we really ought to be thankful to Sedlnitzky. Hope you'll enjoy your walk!" The valet ventured to remind his Excellency not to forget to buy a black silk cravat that he urgently needed. He strolled from the Löwenstrasse to the Vegetable Market, stood for a while in front of a small haberdasher's

Count Taaffe

shop, and then went in. "And what may your Grace require?" "I want a black silk cravat, similar to the one I am wearing, to go twice round my neck." The article was brought and the customer was pleased with it. "Send on the cravat to me to-day," said the Count, "I have no money on me—you will be paid on delivery." "Where shall we send it, please?" "Count Taaffe, Löwenstrasse." With a yell the whole staff jumped up and repeated the query: "To *whom*?" "To Count Taaffe." The shopman and his wife shouted to the assistants: "'Taaffe!' Knock his hat in—the impostor, the swindler—now we've got him—give it to him—Police!" Then some went into the street, and roared "Police!" A policeman came running up, and upon being told whom they had caught, joined in thrashing the luckless Count, who vainly tried to defend himself, and finally collapsed into a chair, groaning: "But I *am* Count Taaffe!" The shopman shouted angrily: "Oh, yes! he's impudent as well, the scoundrel!" The policeman snatched the hat from the head of the poor Count, who was nearly choking, and exclaimed in horror: "Good Lord, it *is* his Excellency! Are you all crazy?" More dead than alive, the victim of an admirably conceived and conscientiously executed police order was lifted into a passing cab and taken to the Löwenstrasse in a sorry plight. So the

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letter of the law had been observed—but unfortunately its heavy hand had fallen on the highest representative of earthly justice!

*Dura lex sed lex.*¹

¹ The law is hard, but it is the law.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

CHAPTER VIII

DANIEL DUNGLAS HOME, THE SPIRITUALIST
(1863)

Who has not heard of the famous spiritualist, Daniel Home? I believe he was one of the first to hold séances; at any rate I cannot remember having heard of anyone who practised spiritualism as a profession, so to speak, before he did. True, table-rapping was already in vogue. A number of people used to gather round a table and establish "contact" from one hand to the next. Sometimes a brief tapping was heard; the pencils in the hands of the "medium" began to dance on the paper, and to scribble what were alleged to be words, although I never managed to decipher them. But that was about all. One day there was announced in Paris the arrival of a noted spiritualist, a man who disdained the parlour tricks performed by ordinary mortals, one who professed to belong to the select company of "great mediums," and in all seriousness promised to bring those who took an interest in the subject into communication with the host of spirits floating through space. This

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man came from America, and was named Daniel Dunglas Home. As he knew that the Emperor Napoleon and the Empress Eugénie took an interest in the supernatural, he sought, and obtained, the honour of being allowed to introduce himself to their Majesties, and to "bring them into communication"—such was the term he applied to the intercourse between the living and the spirits, or, as he called them, "the departed." Nothing in the world would have induced him to speak or allow others to speak of "the dead." "We do not die," he would constantly repeat ; "we merely withdraw from this world."

The séances in the Tuileries created a great sensation, and the Emperor and Empress, as well as their entourage, never ceased to wonder at the phenomena they were privileged to witness. When, as is usual in spring, the carpets were removed, huge pieces of furniture, which six men could lift only with difficulty, began to rock, armchairs and other chairs flew from one end of the room to the other, as if driven by a hurricane ; the cut-glass of the chandeliers started tinkling, on all sides knocking was heard—in fact, it was a regular witches' sabbath. The Emperor had sent for eminent professors to investigate whether these phenomena had been caused by electricity or any other motive power. The men of science could not find any such explanation,

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and, although they were entirely sceptical, they confessed themselves baffled by what they saw with their own eyes. As may well be imagined, the séances and experiments in the Tuileries had aroused widespread curiosity, and everyone wanted to see Home. He lived in such style that it was impossible to send for him as if he had been some professional entertainer. One had to approach him through the agency of a third person, who would obtain from him permission to admit this or that acquaintance to the séance he had organised. In this way Prince Joachim Murat, one of our friends, arranged for a séance in which we were to take part. It was held at the house of M. and Mme. Jauvin d'Attainville, who lived in the Rue de la Paix, at the place, in these latter years, occupied by the famous milliner, Caroline Reboux.

Mme. Jauvin d'Attainville, who was very religious and did not feel drawn towards Home's experiments—looking on them rather as a sort of black magic—was at first unwilling to receive the spiritualist at her house. She could only be persuaded to alter her decision by being assured that Home, far from being an unbeliever, prided himself on being a good Christian; nay, a good Catholic, asserting that once, being in love with a Russian lady (she was a Princess, but I cannot recall her name) and intending to

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marry her, he insisted on her becoming converted to the Catholic faith, a request with which she complied. She died, and after she had received the last Sacrament, she said in clear tones : "I swear by the Sacred Host, which has just been handed to me as my last earthly food, that all my husband does and says is the pure and unvarnished truth."

She was consumptive, and during the last two years of her life she saw—or fancied she saw—a woman, who, wearing a long white veil, appeared every day at her bedside and pointed to her veil, which was constantly growing shorter. The woman said to her : "When the veil reaches no lower than my face, your death is near. On the day when you see my face, you will draw your last breath !" When the dying woman had sworn the oath upon the Host, she remained silent for a few moments ; then tried to rise, opened her eyes wide, and, as a blissful smile spread over her features, cried out : "Ah ! now I see her !" and passed away. All this was recounted in these very words by the priests who were with her in her last moments. I make no comment. I merely repeat what trustworthy persons have often told me.

I will now return to the séance at M. and Mme. Jauvin d'Attainville's house. The room was very spacious, comfortably and even richly furnished, and as brightly lit as if it

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had been day. I lay stress upon this point, and may add that during the whole séance the chandeliers and lamps were in full blaze. Nothing could escape our eyes. The party numbered some fifteen persons. When we arrived at an early hour, about a quarter past nine, Mr. Home was not present. Mme. Jauvin seemed to be rather excited, and betrayed her nervousness by saying with a smile that it was possible that the spirits would not answer the call of their comrade or earthly friend. Half incredulous, yet not quite at ease, inclined to be angry, and at the same time disposed to treat the matter as a joke, she went on talking in this strain. Then the door opened, and at Prince Murat's side we beheld the mysterious, long-awaited hero of the day, the man who inspired fear and uneasiness alike, Dunglas Home. Prince Murat introduced him to Mme. Jauvin, then to us others, and I had leisure to examine him closely. He may have been (in 1863) thirty-six, and cannot have been more than forty. Fairly tall, slim, well-built, in his dress-suit and white tie he looked like a "gentleman" of the highest social standing. His face was attractive in its expression of gentle melancholy. He was very pale, with light china-blue eyes—they were not piercing; rather were they inclined to be sleepy—reddish hair, thick and abundant, but not

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inordinately long, no pianist's or violin-player's "mop"; in short, he was of pleasing appearance, with nothing striking about him except, perhaps, the pallor of his complexion, which, however, seemed natural from its contrast with his red hair and beard. Home's features reminded one of a certain portrait of Vandyke's in the Liechtenstein Gallery in Vienna, which, if I am not mistaken, is supposed to be a portrait of Wallenstein.

We took our seats, accordingly, in no prescribed order, at a round table, on which lay a cloth. Nothing had been prepared—it was the table round which the family was always wont to assemble, and which stood in the same place as always. Some sat close to it, the others a little farther away—each as he or she pleased. Home sat in an arm-chair some three or four yards from the table, so that any contact between him and the table was out of the question. "I don't know," he said, in a muffled voice, "whether *they* are there yet; in fact, whether *they* will come at all." These words made us women-folk shiver. *They*, the spirits! Home rested his head on the back of the chair and closed his eyes . . . he grew paler and paler. "The trance is beginning," whispered Prince Murat, in English. Suddenly Home uttered an English name—Bryan—and asked: "Bryan, are you there?" At the same moment, from

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the direction of the table, came the sound of two short, sharp taps in quick succession, and with such a peculiar rhythm that I fancy I can still hear them to-day. "Bryan nearly always comes when I call him ; he was my best friend," exclaimed Home. And at once the lustres of the chandeliers began to move, and from the back of the room a chair came, as if propelled by an irresistible force, and suddenly stopped in front of us. Home remained in his seat without moving a muscle. Suddenly he exclaimed : "They are here. They're all round us. They will reveal themselves, and everyone of you will be convinced of their presence." At the same instant I had a feeling as if an iron hand was gripping my knuckles. I uttered a scream ! Others felt that iron grasp on the nape of their necks, others on their arms ; but it did not cause the slightest pain. One detects the pressure of the fingers, of each individual finger ; but one must have been through the experience to realise what it means.

Then the table-cover was gently raised, and we saw something underneath move towards us, like hands under a cloth. Instinctively I shrank back : the gentlemen, and my husband too, caught hold of these hands and clasped them firmly so as not to let them slip away ; but one after the other, despite all efforts, felt that the object he tried to seize was

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melting away, as it were, beneath his fingers. They lifted the cloth as quickly as possible, to see if there was any conjuring trick involved. With all their searching—some had even crawled under the table, in order to keep watch there—they found nothing. Home did not move, and merely looked at them with indifference. After a few minutes the gentlemen came up from under the table and resumed their seats. Hardly had they done so before taps, repeated at brief intervals, sounded out of the table—I say deliberately “out of the table,” for that was the impression we had. One might have imagined that someone was sitting under the table and making these sharp taps. My husband could stand it no longer ; he declared that he was going to instal himself under the table, so as to discover how these taps, apparently coming from below, were worked. Hardly had he done so ere he exclaimed : “Don’t rap on the table from above—no jokes, if you please !” We had to tell him that none of us had made any movement, and that we had heard the knocking come from below, just as before.

For a moment all present were speechless—we could make nothing of the business. My husband emerged from his hiding-place, and the experiments proceeded. Suddenly Home, as white as a sheet, exclaimed : “The spirits are all round us. One is quite near you.

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You surely feel it, like a light breath?" And one and all actually had the feeling of a breath playing round our shoulders and hair. The men, who were uncompromisingly sceptical, could only admit that they were conscious of it, just as we women were.

At this point, Home, who was now in complete "trance," exclaimed: "There is one approaching the piano. I'll ask him to bring you the bunch of violets that one of you has left lying there." His head sank back on the top of the armchair, and at the same moment we saw the bunch of violets glide over the smooth surface, rise, and unsteadily traverse the empty space that lay between the piano and the table, until at last it fell into my lap. My husband seized it in order to see if he could discover a thread or a hair to which it might have been fastened. He found nothing, and handed it back to me, slightly disappointed. He did not know what to make of it.

Finally Home asked, in a very faint voice, if we had a harmonica, a so-called melophone, an instrument that one holds on one's knees and, working the bellows with the left hand, plays with the right, the keys being similar to those of the piano. Home added that the conditions that day were so favourable that it might be feasible to make *them* play. "They will want to play; perhaps *they* will

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be able to do so," he said. *They*, of course, were again the spirits. Two of our friends offered to go to a music-shop on the Boulevard and get a harmonica in accordance with the wishes of the spirits. The suggestion was heartily approved, and the pair quickly went off on their errand. Meanwhile, Home had risen with some difficulty from his armchair and had come over to where we were sitting. The lustres of the chandeliers kept on tinkling, on all sides we heard tapping on the furniture and panels of the walls, but neither the medium nor we others any longer took notice of these portents.

Home asked me whether I did not find this communication with the spirits agreeable. I answered frankly: "I prefer to communicate with the living." "For all that," he rejoined, "there is something comforting about it, for nothing more is needed to convince unbelievers that the soul is immortal." "As I am convinced of that in any case," I said, "I see no necessity for living with the dead!" Home laid a warning finger on my mouth, and added softly: "You must not speak of the dead—there are no dead. There are only those who have vanished from our ken, disappeared from our earthly vision. They live, just as you and I do, but in other spheres. Of such a one we must say that he has departed, not that he is dead."

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In these alleged spirit revelations (whether they really were that, or whether it was a matter of conjuring-tricks, I feel unable either to affirm or to deny) Home saw irrefutable proof of an after-life, and seemed very indignant when anyone stigmatised them as varieties of black magic. He showed a great reverence for the Holy Father—then Pius IX.—and from time to time went to Rome to pay his respects to the Pope. The latter set his face against spiritualism, and it was said that he had earnestly recommended Home to give up his dealings with the spirit-world. Home, however, had assured his Holiness that the revelations were entirely independent of his will; he himself was tired of them, and wished that they would not manifest themselves so often. Where does the truth lie?

Father Ravignan, one of the most famous priests and preachers of the day in Paris, knew Home very well, and was earnestly convinced that the man acted in all good faith. But he was no friend of spiritualism, and did his best to wean Home from these practices.

To go back to the séance. Our friends had meanwhile returned from their mission, bearing the melophone like a trophy of victory. Home asked me to take it in one hand and hold it high above my head, standing alone in the centre of the room. I in-

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serted my right hand in the strap by which the bellows were attached to the instrument, and waited. Suddenly I felt a tug at the melophone, as if someone were trying to work the bellows. Dumbfounded, I suddenly heard, as did all others present, a sound of marvellous playing, so soft and melodious that one would have said it was celestial music. The excitement had reached its highest pitch. As the notes that rang out from this apparently bewitched instrument were, or seemed to be, supernatural, many of us had tears in our eyes. Seldom will such tones be heard again. With this musical performance Home's séance at Mme. Jauvin d'Attainville's came to an end. The spirits seemed to be worn out.

People who never attended any of Home's séances have maintained that the so-called spirit hands were really the medium's feet. But I ask how it would be possible for a man sitting by himself in an armchair, three or four yards from the table, and within full view of the whole company, to do such things with his feet. This theory will not hold water.

That Home may have been a wonderful conjurer, I will admit; that he was an unrivalled hypnotist is not impossible; but what I roundly deny is that any of us had any feeling that we had been hypnotised, or that any of the customary processes of hypnotism had been applied to us. The drawing-room,

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as I have said, was as brightly lit as if it were day, and was never darkened for a single moment. All that I have recounted took place in the simplest fashion, without any preparation. No one was nervous or unduly excited. The ladies uttered little screams, indeed, when the "spirit hands" touched them or the "breath" grazed their shoulders—that was all. When the séance was over Mme. Jauvin d'Attainville invited the guests to take tea in the dining-room, and Home sat down at the same table as the rest of us to restore his energies with a little tea. His pallor had vanished, and his face had resumed its normal colour.

A few days later we were invited to the Tuileries to a private séance, given by Home in the Empress's rooms. It was held between five and six o'clock. I confess that I found it much less interesting than the one Mme. Jauvin d'Attainville had provided for us. The spirits did not seem to be in the right mood. When in the gardens of the Tuileries the customary tattoo was played by a regiment that was marching through, a table began to knock in the same time and accompanied the drums in a muffled tone. This was curious, but rather childish. On the other hand, there was one phenomenon that struck me then, one of which no one, not even any professor of physics, has ever been able to give me an

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explanation. On the little table that had just played the drum so prettily, there stood a candlestick with a lighted candle. The table began to move, to rise, to dance, then to lean so far forward that under ordinary circumstances anything placed upon it would inevitably have fallen off. But what happened? Not only did the candlestick not fall off, but the flame, instead of continuing to burn perpendicularly—as, of course, normally happens when one holds a candle at a slant—leant over at the same angle as the candle and the table. Let him explain this marvel who can!

Home assured the Empress that he was not in a condition to establish the desired communication with the spirit-world, and that there were days on which the revelations could hardly be obtained at all: on such days one might fancy that *they* were angry with him or making fun of him—in a word, the séance was a failure.

One day Mr. Home was announced at my house. I admit that I felt slightly uncomfortable at the thought of sitting opposite him alone, and I was on the point of sending word that I was engaged, when a sense of shame at my cowardice came over me, and I told the servant to ask him in. I offered him a seat opposite me, and we began to chat, when close by me, a peculiar noise, like that of big plashing drops, began to fall upon my

Daniel Dunglas Home, Spiritualist

ear. I pretended at first not to notice it, and Home went on talking, quite unconcerned. At last, however, the noise grew so loud that I could not resist turning my head to the right, towards the place from which it seemed to come. The expression of obvious uneasiness with which I looked at my visitor made him smile. "Oh, it's nothing!" he said. "That's *one of them* quite near you. This happens nearly always when I am about the place; they follow me everywhere; they seldom leave me alone entirely. If my little son is there, they're more active than ever. The manifestations are then unusually vigorous. If you like, Princess, I'll bring the boy with me one day; he's three years old. I'll let him stay alone with you. You will be astonished and—convinced. For you will have to acknowledge that a child of that age can't do conjuring tricks, especially without any preparation." I thanked Mr. Home warmly for his proposal, but told him, without beating about the bush, that I should certainly be afraid to be left alone with a child who was always attended by spirits.

"One mustn't be afraid of *them*," he protested; "it distresses them if one is." And with these words he took his leave. In my collection of autographs I have preserved a letter from him, and I have often felt tempted to lay it before me on the table and ask aloud :

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“Bryan, are you there?” Frankly, I have never had the courage to do so.

When I tell my friends what I have written here about the famous spiritualist, they usually declare that all I thought I saw existed only in my imagination, and that I *was* actually in a hypnotic state. They may be right; but, if so, it is remarkable that I was never conscious of the fact; that I never for a moment felt as if I were waking up from a dream-like condition; and that my husband—one of the most clear-headed of men and as inaccessible to the teachings of occultism as anyone could be—saw all that I did, and described it in much the same words that I have used.

Home has long since gone over to the great company of those whom he called “the departed.” Was he a man who could call up spirits, or was he a mere conjurer, mountebank, or mesmerist? I do not care to say definitely either the one thing or the other. I only know that both my husband and I always had the impression that we were being shown some wonderful and inexplicable feats of legerdemain, a view that was shared by the Emperor Napoleon III. and the Empress Eugénie.

THE END.

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